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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

Prophecies of the Apocalypse.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

THE author having in the course of a ministry of more than twenty years made prophecy a subject of frequent reading and study, at length found time to write the following discourses.

He ventures to present them to the public in the hope that they will be found to throw some additional light on the hidden sense of the apocalypse, and be in some degree instrumental in promoting attention and respect to the teachings and admonitions of that wonderful book.

St. John has declared them blessed who read and hear the words of his prophecy and keep the sayings written therein.

The author asks of those to whom these pages may come, that they will not prejudge them as fanciful and obscure, but give them a candid investigation.

DISCOURSE I.

CLEMENT of Alexandria, a learned Christian writer of the second century, makes mention in one of his works, of a foreign philosophy, which considered the sensible world to be an image of an ideal world.

Indeed, in the philosophy or literature of all nations, objects of sense are often used for the purpose of representing objects of an intellectual nature. It is for such a purpose, that sensible representations are used in the revelations communicated to the Apostle John. To ascertain the hidden sense of the visions recorded by him in the book of revelation, we must understand that the sensible world represents an ideal world, the world of Roman rule and empire; the Roman world, and that objects, bodies, places, properties, and events in the one, represent corresponding objects, bodies, places, properties, and events in the other.

Heaven, or the regions on high, correspond to the high places of authority or influence. The sun, moon, and stars, in the firmament of heaven, represent those stations or persons, who by their eminent positions, and by the intellectual light and influences emanating from them, enlighten and rule the world.

The earth being under the heavens, corresponds to the place of subjection which contains the governed part of the population.

The winds have their region and motion immediately above the surface of the earth, and are restless in their nature, ready to break forth into violence and storm. The four winds of the earth held or restrained from blowing, represent the restless elements or nations, or communities on the frontier, who were ready to break forth in war and revolution upon the empire, but were kept in a state of restraint and quiet by the Roman armies. The earth as signifying land, represents the place of privilege and stability, occupied by those subjects, who possess-

ing the name and rights of Romans, were fixed and settled in their homage and obedience. The waters, including fountains, rivers, and seas, represent that portion of the population which consisted of the less privileged subjects, comprehending people and multitudes, and nations and tongues. Fountains and rivers, represent communities or nations of a foreign language and civilization, in alliance or favour with the Romans. While the sea represents the greatness of provincial subjects. The things under the earth, represent that portion of the population who existed in an oppressed and obscure condition. Of the things on the earth, a mountain stands for some portion or community of the Roman people eminent and strong.

Trees correspond to men of rank and family—the nobility. While grass corresponds to the Roman people of an inferior rank and condition. A living body represents a corporation. The people of a city considered as a body corporate and politic, is represented by a woman, while a large or catholic corporation, including nations and kingdoms, is represented by some great powerful animal. A horse stands for a military corporation. The word corporation is derived from a Latin word, which means, a living body. Man is especially distinguished from the lower animal creation by a sense of religion, and so men are intended to convey the idea of religious worshippers. The different tribes of Israel, represent the different Roman communities, where Christianity is the prevailing or established religion. While nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, represent the different Roman communities where idolatry or paganism is the prevailing religion. The word nation, or Gentile, or heathen, is a translation of the same Greek word, and is in many parts of scripture used as synonymous with idolaters.

From the prophet Ezekiel, we learn that in measuring periods of idolatrous oppression and tyranny, a day is the divinely appointed representative of a year. Perhaps the word in this sense is to be confined to such periods, and is not intended to apply to the predicted 1000 years of blessedness.

Attaching such corresponding signification to the several sensible objects mentioned, let us proceed to ascertain the meaning concealed under such a covering, in those visions or sensible representations narrated in the 6th and 7th chapters of the Book of the Revelation of St. John.

In the first three chapters, the Apostle narrates what he had seen and heard of matters relating to his own times, but in the beginning of the 4th chapter, he apprises us that he is going to narrate what he had seen and heard of matters relating to future times.

Revelations, Chap. 4th and 5th.—"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty

elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which

is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that lived for ever and ever."

The sensible representations narrated in these 4th and 5th chapters, are especially intended to teach us that for the revelation of these future events, we are indebted to the prevailing merits and instrumentality of our crucified Redeemer.

These future events are contained in a book sealed with seven seals, and this book, no one in heaven, or earth, or under the earth, no one in the wide creation was found worthy to take and open, but the Lamb, who was slain for us, and hath redeemed us unto God by his blood.

The next two chapters, the 6th and 7th, are taken up with the opening of six of the seals, and the exposure of their contents. As each seal is opened in succession, its contents are exposed in sensible representations.

"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals. And I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow: and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

The horse with his rider represents Roman power, as a military corporation under the direction and control of emperors.

The military force constituted the foundation of the imperial government. The very word emperor, in its original import, signified a general or commander of an army.

White is the emblem of justice and innocence. The white color of the horse is intended to exhibit the army as yet innocent of the vices and crimes peculiar to a military corporation, when it becomes the controling or ruling power.

The bow is the symbol of power in war, while the crown is

the symbol of monarchical authority—the authority of the supreme magistrate.

The rider with the bow and the crown, going forth conquering and to conquer, represents a succession of emperors, who, by their ability in war and in civil government, would command universal submission, and secure universal order and prosperity. And such was the character of the army and of the emperors, in the period that immediately followed the age of St. John.

Ireneus, Origen and other early Christian writers concur in saying, that St. John received these visions in the latter part of the reign of the Emperor Domitian. And if any man, says Gibbon, (3 chap.) were called to fix the period in the history of the world, when the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm, but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect.

During a period of four score years, (Gibbon, 1 Chap.) the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines. Within two years after the death of Domitian, Trajan succeeded to the empire. He was a warlike Prince and an able general, and his "reign of twenty years was a succession of military victories and conquests. Every day the astonished Senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations, that acknowledged his sway."

We should name the Emperor Trajan, if we might select a single emperor, to represent the rider on the white horse with the bow and the crown, going forth conquering and to conquer.

The next three successors of Trajan, though they did not pursue his system of conquest, yet commanded the respect of the surrounding nations by the terror of the Roman arms, and

the moderation and justice of their conduct. They endeavoured to convince mankind that the Roman power placed above the temptation of conquest, was actuated by love of order and justice. And hence the fiercest Barbarians frequently submitted their differences to the arbitration of the emperor."

Marcus Aurelius was the last emperor who made the good of his subjects the chief object of his government, and with him expired the virtue and glory of the army and of imperial power.

Thus from the end of the first century, when St. John had just finished his labours and his life, down to the year when Commodus became emperor, the Roman army as a body or corporation, exhibited a fair character for moderation and justice towards the rest of the empire, and was commanded by a succession of Princes distinguished for ability and success, both in war and in civil government.

But from the accession of Commodus, the army exhibited a new character, and came under the conduct of a new kind of emperors.

"And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, come and see. And there went out another horse, that was red (of fire,) and power was given to him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given to him a great sword."

The color red or of fire, is significant of anger, wrath, hostility, and by the red or fiery color of the horse, we are taught that the army would now appear in an angry and hostile aspect towards the rest of the empire. Such an angry and hostile spirit in the army was made manifest in the reign of Commodus, who, by the impunity with which he executed his bloody vengeance upon Senators and citizens, taught the soldiers the weakness of the Senate, and of the civil authority, and their own power and importance in the government, and which led them to usurp the rights of electing the emperor, a right which had hitherto belonged to the civil authority. By the power or permission given to the rider on this horse, to take peace from the

earth, and that they should kill one another, we are to understand that the course of the imperial administration would be attended with strife and war among the Romans themselves. And such was the fact in the reigns of Commodus and of his immediate successors. In the reign of Commodus, the concord which had hitherto existed between the army and the civil authority, was changed into discord and strife, and at his death, the whole empire was involved in the evils of civil war.

Besides the power or permission given to this rider to create discord and civil war among the Romans, there was also given unto him a great sword. To the rider with the bow on the white horse, there was given a crown, but to the rider on the red horse, there was given a great sword.

While the bow and the crown are symbolic, both of military and civil power, they do not convey prominently, the idea of penal power, which the sword does. The great sword, therefore, given to the rider on the second horse, gives us to understand, that it would be the policy of the emperors represented by this rider, to maintain the order and submission of the empire by the severity and terror of sanguinary penal inflictions.

Commodus set the example of the cruel use of this absolute and terrible power, with which he was invested. But if we might select a single emperor, we should name Septemus Severus as the rider on the red horse, who had permission to create discord and war on the Roman earth, and to whom was given the great sword. He established himself upon the imperial throne at the expense of a bloody civil war, which convulsed the whole empire. And he was cruel and severe in the exercise of his power over the lives of his subjects. He sentenced to a bloody execution, illustrious females and Roman Senators, and many of the noblest provincials of Gaul and Spain. He was cruel on system, and wrote a treatise in vindication of his excessive severity in the punishment of political offenders. Gibbon, in the chapters containing this period of Roman history, begins with a short paragraph on the power of

the sword, which the emperors now without disguise used as the instrument of government. The emperors now no longer took pains to conceal the fact, of the ascendancy and supremacy of the sword—the military power.

"And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld. And lo, a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

Black being the sign of affliction, and of grief, and mourning, we may learn from the black color of the horse, that the army would now exhibit itself in a character afflictive and grievous to the rest of the empire—exhibit the character of a grievous military despotism. And with this character of the army will correspond the character of the imperial administration.

The pair of balances, or the yoke which the rider has in his hand, is the sign of severe justice, or heavy and grievous oppression. And the high price of wheat and barley, and the caution not to hurt or adulterate the oil and the wine—implying a great scarcity of these articles, signify that this heavy and grievous military imperial oppression, would fall upon the cultivators of the soil, and prove detrimental to agriculture. It was the saying of a Persian monarch, that the authority of a prince must be defended by a military force; that force can only be maintained by taxes; all taxes must at last fall upon agriculture, and agriculture can never flourish, but under the protection of justice and moderation.

When the emperors came to depend wholly upon the army for their election and power, it became their principal object to secure the affection of that body, and they began to esteem the good opinion of the citizens as of little moment.

They increased the pay of the soldiers to an extravagant degree, and began to confer upon them extraordinary donations, on every public occasion of danger or festivity. And this ex-

cessive increase of their pay, and of donations, compelled the emperors to increase the weight of taxes, which falling upon the productions of the soil and enhancing their prices, pressed heavily upon the indigent classes of society. And the extravagant expenditure and consumption of the army, and of the imperial government which had to be supplied by the industrious and producing classes, now began to be felt as a heavy and grievous yoke.

We may begin this period of imperial oppressive taxation with the emperor Caracalla, the son of Severus, and extend it down beyond the Emperor Maximin.

The sixth chapter of Gibbon, dwells upon this period, in the last part of this chapter before he begins in the next chapter to narrate the oppression and tyranny of Maximin, he thinks it the proper time and place to give us a short account of imperial taxation and oppression. He begins the period of oppressive imperial taxation with the Emperor Caracalla, the son and successor of Septimus Severus, whose policy it was to lavish his favours and gifts upon the army. But the liberality of the father, says the historian, has been restrained by prudence, and his indulgence to the troops, was tempered by firmness and authority. The careless profession of the son was the policy of one reign, and the inevitable ruin of the army, and of the empire. The vigor of the soldiers instead of being confirmed by the severe discipline of the camps, melted away in the luxuries of cities. The excessive increase of their pay and donations exhausted the state to enrich the military order.

"The rapacious son of Severus, was not contented with such "a measure of taxation as had appeared sufficient to his mode- "rate predecessors, but during his reign, he crushed alike every "part of the empire under the weight of his iron sceptre"—his iron yoke.

This emperor used the most iniquitous means to obtain money for purchasing the venal support of the army. He confiscated the property of the richest men in Rome. He impoverished

his subjects in all the provinces of the empire, by his excessive taxes, that he might give away immense sums to his guards, and pay heavy annuities to the barbarians on the frontiers. He granted to all the free inhabitants of the empire, the name and privileges of Romans, in order that he might derive from them additional taxes.

"When all the provincials," says Gibbon, "became liable to "the peculiar impositions of Roman citizens, they seemed to "acquire a legal exemption from the tributes which they had "paid in their former condition as subjects. Such were not the "maxims of government adopted by Caracalla and his pretended "son. The old as well as the new taxes were at the same time "levied in the provinces. In the course of this history, we "shall be too often summoned to explain the land tax—the capi-"tation and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil and meat, "which were exacted from these provinces for the use of the "courts, the army and the capitol."

The emperor Maximin, may be adduced as a conspicuous representative of the rider on the black horse, who had in his hand a yoke, and who was followed with the cry of severity and oppression.

"This tyrant's avarice," says Gibbon, "stimulated by the insa-"tiate desires of the soldiers, at length attacked the public pro-"perty. Every city of the empire was possessed of an independent "revenue, destined to purchase corn for the multitude, and to "supply the expenses of the games and entertainments. By "a single act of authority the whole mass of wealth was at "once confiscated for the use of the imperial treasury. The "temples were stripped of their most valuable offering of gold "and silver, and the statues of gods, heroes and emperors were "melted down, and coined into money. These impious orders "could not be executed without tumults and massacres, as many "places the people choose rather to die in the defence of their "altars, than to behold in the midst of peace their cities expos-"ed to the rapine and cruelty of war. Throughout the Roman

"world, a general cry of indignation was heard imploring ven-
"geance on the common enemy of human kind, and at length
"by an act of private oppression, a peaceful and unarmed pro-
"vince was driven into rebellion against him."

After the death of Maximin, there was a short intermission of military oppression, until in the reign of the emperor Philip, the army and the imperial government exhibiting the signs of division and dissolution, inflicted on the empire all the evils of military rule and despotism.

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked and behold a pale horse! and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

The original word for pale, is more commonly translated green. And the color green, when it qualifies grass, or vegetation, denotes health and vigor, but it has an oppositive signification when it is used to qualify an animal body. It then denotes a state of decay and corruption.

This horse had on him a rider called death, and is accompanied by hell. Mortality and corruption, are here personified. The color of the horse portends that the army during this period would exhibit symptoms of approaching dissolution—while death and hell, portend that the calamities inflicted upon the Roman people, by imperial power during this period, would be of the most disastrous nature.

The sword is the emblem of death inflicted by the civil magistrate or in war—hunger denotes wants of the necessaries of life; death signifies pestilence, while the beasts, wild beasts of the earth, signify bodies, or combinations of men, whose object is rapine and prey.

The meaning of the whole is that the army and the imperial government approaching a state of dissolution, would be accompanied in their course by great mortality among the Romans,

occasioned by penal executions and civil war—by famine, by pestilence, and by rapacious combinations, or bodies of violent men. This period of Roman history extends from the reign of the emperor Philip, down to the death of Galienus. To the undiscerning eye of the vulgar, says Gibbon, Philip appeared a monarch, no less powerful than Hadrian, or Augustus, had formerly been. "The form (of the monarchy,) was still the same, but the animating health and vigour were gone."

This author commences the chapter which relates the history of this period in the following language.

From the great secular games celebrated by Philip, (A. D. 248,) to the death of the emperor Galienus, (A. D. 268,) there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. During that calamitous period, every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted by barbarous invaders, and military tyrants, wild beasts, and the ruined *empire seemed to approach* the last and fatal moment of its dissolution, and he concludes the chapter in the following language, relating to a general famine, which prevailed during this period. This long and general famine says he, was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food.

Other causes must however, have contributed to the furious plague, which from the year 250, to the year 265, raged without interruption, in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman empire. During some time 5,000 persons died daily at Rome. And many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated. Could we venture to extend the mortality of Alexandria, to the provinces of the empire, we might suspect that war, (the sword,) pestilence, (death,) and famine, (hunger,) had consumed in a few years a moiety of the human species.

During the reign of Galienus, the imperial throne was con-

tested by nineteen pretenders, and the empire infested by a general irruption of the barbarians, so that while the public forces of the state, were dissipated in private quarrels, the defenceless provinces lay exposed to every invader. "The bravest usurpers "were compelled by the perplexity of their situation, to con- "clude ignominious treaties with the common enemy, to pur- "chase with oppressive tributes the neutrality or service of the "barbarians, and to introduce hostile and independent nations "into the heart of the Roman monarchy. Such were the bar- "barians, and such the tyrants, who under the reigns of "Valerian and Galienus, *dismembered the provinces and re-* "*duced the empire to the lowest pitch of disgrace and ruin, from* "*which* it seemed impossible that it should ever emerge." For its escape from utter ruin, it was chiefly indebted to the emperor Aurelian—but even in a battle fought with the barbarians under this able emperor, the Romans received so severe a blow, that the immediate dissolution of the empire was apprehended.

This indeed was the last stage of the imperial government, considered as a military power.

After this calamitous period a revolution in the Roman constitution, was begun by Diocletian, and consummated by Constantine, and his successors. One of the principles of the new system introduced by Diocletian, was division. He divided the empire —the provinces and every branch of the civil as well as military administration.

The object of such division was to establish a proper balance between the civil and military powers. But this division of power which had been commenced by Diocletian, and improved by Constantine and his successors, while it secured the tranquility of the emperor, destroyed the vigor and power of the army.

The imperial power became a simple despotism, with more of a political than of a military character. The great curse of the Romans, during several centuries had been military despotism, but the license of the turbulent soldiery was now checked and

restrained by the pride and pomp with which the civil and imperial authority was surrounded—and the despotism of a court, was put in place of the despotism of a camp, and thus the Roman power ceased to be a military despotism, and in the next period of Roman history, it appears in the character of a religious despotism, attempting the extermination of Christianity. And consequently the horse is no longer used to represent the Romans as a body corporate, but a different animal is used for this purpose in a subsequent (12th) chapter.

DISCOURSE II.

Revelations, vi. 9-11.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, Oh Lord, holy and true, dos't thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. And white robes were given, unto every one of them: and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren which should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

Here the souls or persons of those who had sacrificed their lives for their Christian faith and testimony, are represented as under the altar, and from thence calling upon God, with a loud voice, and inquiring how much longer he would allow the dwellers on the earth—the pagan Romans, to shed the blood of Christians with impunity. And the purport of the answer to their inquiry was, that they should wait patiently for a short time, until the pagan Romans in their sanguinary persecution of Christians had filled up a certain measure, beyond which the judgment of God would overtake them, and deprive them of their persecuting power.

From the contents of this fifth seal, we learn that the teachers

and professors of Christianity were now to suffer a short, but final period of sanguinary persecution at the hands of the Pagan Romans.

This period of pagan Roman persecution began in the reign of Diocletian. It terminated upon the accession of Constantine, to the undivided imperial throne, when the pagans lost their power and influence with the government, and were no longer allowed to persecute men unto death, merely because they were Christians. Whenever any great calamity befell the empire, such as civil war or famine, or pestilence, the pagans ascribed it to the christians for neglecting the established worship, and not only vented their rage against them in popular outbreaks but persuaded and stirred up the government to punish and exterminate, what they termed a pestilent sect.

If the Tiber, (says Tertullian, who lived in the second century,) has overflowed its banks, or the Nile has not overflowed, if heaven has refused its rain : if the earth has been shaken ; if famine or plague has spread its ravages, the cry is immediately raised—"Away with the Christians to the lions." It was the mistaken belief of the pagans that the prosperity of the empire, was connected with the due observance of the established religion, and hence when they found themselves suffering under some general misfortune and calamity, they regarded such misfortune and calamity as evidences of the displeasure of the God's, for the neglect of their worship.

Now as christianity was every year drawing away multitudes from the pagan worship, and bringing that worship into neglect and disuse, the cry against them upon every repetition of calamity that befell the empire, became louder and louder, urging the government to use severe measures with the teachers and professors of Christianity, in order to stop the progress of that pestilent religion. At length after a period of extraordinary public calamity which the pagans ascribed to the prevalence of christianity, and the consequent neglect of the pagan worship, they prevailed upon the government in the reign of Diocletian,

to attempt the utter extermination of the christian religion, and to this end to commence against its teachers and professors, a persecution more general and sanguinary than any preceding one. "It lasted ten whole years, and exceeded all the preced- "ing in its indiscriminate massacres and severities. Such mul- "titudes of Christians, suffered death in all the provinces of the "empire, that the emperors believed that they had accomplished "their purpose, and completely extirpated Christianity." They "told the world in a pompous inscription, that they had extin- "guished the Christian name and superstition, and every where "restored the worship of the god's to its former purity and lus- tre." Their triumph however was but short—and was the pre- cursor of the utter ruin of paganism, as the established reli- gion. These violent means which the government employed to extirpate christianity, only hastened the political destruction of paganism.

For the noble and devoted constancy with which many chris- tians endured martyrdom, excited the admiration of the best portion of the Gentile world, and led them into an examination of the gospel, which was followed with a conviction of its divine origin and authority. And to the patience and fidelity with which they adhered to their religion at the sacrifice of their pro- perty and their lives, are we in a great measure indebted that christianity survived its pagan persecutions, and has been trans- mitted down to our days, and it is for this reason that we modern christians honor their memory and regard their blood as the seed of the Church. This period of Roman history has been com- monly termed the era of martyrs.

But we are now in the sixth seal, approaching a terrible cat- astrophe, which befell the pagan Roman world.

Chapter 6th, 12-17. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty

wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains. And said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand.

In the scene of the sixth seal, the Apostle witnesses a shaking or concussion, which effects the heavens as well as the earth. The sun becomes perfectly black, and the moon assumes the color of blood—the stars are seen falling from heaven, as fruit from a shaken tree, and the whole heaven departs out of sight. As the contents of a manuscript or book when the manuscript is rolled together, or the book shut up. The pagan heaven, the pagan sun, moon and stars—the pagan lights are now laid aside as we lay aside a manuscript, or book after we have read it, and have no further present use for it.

The old lights of the Roman world—that is the teachers and philosophers, and priests, and rulers, and emperors of the pagan school, are now removed from their high places of influence, and cease to rule intellectually and morally the Roman world.

The ruin of the pagan religion, says Gibbon, is described by the Sophists, as a dreadful and an amazing prodigy, which covered the earth with darkness and restored the ancient dominion of chaos of night.

But the mountaius and islands were also affected by this concussion.

Mountains represent the population of Roman communities, or cities of eminence and power. While islands correspond to the population of communities or cities called colonies, and located among foreign nations. These mountains and islands do not depart away as do the heavens, but they are merely removed

out of their places, and this removal answers to those changes introduced among the subject population in the reign of Constantine, by a new division and arrangement of the empire, into prefectures, and dioceses, and provinces. In this new division and arrangements, the different portions of the subject population were placed in positions somewhat different from those in which they had previously stood towards each other. Rome for instance was now made to show her place and position as the capital city of the empire, with Constantinople, and thus both cities were to some extent removed from their previous positions, in respect to political rank and importance. We further learn that these extraordinary events in the Roman heaven and earth, are witnessed with great alarm by the men of the earth—the pagan worshipers. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man—all the priests and ministers of pagan worship, from the highest to the lowest, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, calling upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand. The day has come for christianity to execute retribution upon us, and to treat us as we treated her, and now we ministers of the pagan worship, in the practise of our vocation must seek places of concealment and obscurity, and retire into the country and villages among the ignorant and the rustic.

The old religion after it had become an illegal religion retired into obscure villages, and rural districts, where it was less exposed to the notice of government, and where the pagans endeavored to elude the laws against them by disguising their religions, under the appearance of convivial meetings. As the population of the rural districts, was generally ignorant and consisted for the most part of slaves—the old religion maintained its ground among them for a considerable time.

The original word from which pagan is derived signified at first the neighborhood, who frequented the same fountain—afterwards it came to be synonymous with rustics—the word peasant is a corruption of the word pagan.

As Christianity gradually obtained possession of the cities, the old religion retired and languished in rural districts and insignificant villages, and hence its votaries received the name of pagans.

The period of history unfolding these changes was that, which intervened between Constantine and Theodoseus—and comprehended the greatest part of the fourth century.

But we have not yet finished the contents of the sixth seal; another event occurs under this seal, and during this period, namely, a great falling away from a pure Christian worship.

Rev. vii. 1.—"And after these things, I saw four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree."

The four winds of the earth represent those nations who were disposed to war and violence, and who were restrained by the Roman armies from devastating the empire.

Diocletian, convinced that the abilities of a single man was inadequate to the public defence, associated three colleagues in the exercise of the Supreme power, both civil and military. He discovered that the empire, assailed on every side, required on every side, the presence of a great army, and of an emperor. He therefore divided the empire into four parts, and assigned to each part an emperor, and an army for its defence. The strength of the legions was thus distributed among four partners of sovereignty. Every one was sovereign within his own jurisdiction; but their united authority extended over the whole monarchy, and each one of them was prepared to assist his colleagues with his counsel and his presence.

Though the division of the imperial power among four sovereigns did not long survive the reign of Diocletian, yet the same

numerical division of the frontiers and of the legions was continued under Constantine, after he had united in his single person the whole of the imperial sovereignty.

Instead of the four emperors, the defence of the four frontiers, was under Constantine and his successors, committed to four chief commanders. The number four, which is applied to the angels and to the winds, may be meant to correspond to these four divisions of the military power, created for the purpose of defending the empire from the elements of violence, on or within its four frontiers. But we may understand the word four in the sense of universality, and then the four angels holding the four winds, will convey the idea that the Roman armies, placed in every part of the empire for its defence, were to continue for some time longer to hold in check the power of the barbarians, and to restrain them from a universal outbreak upon the empire.

The Roman armies kept these barbarians under restraint until after the death of Theodosius.

In the second and third verses, the Apostle relates "that he saw another angel ascending from the East: And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, neither the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads."

This symbolic representation is of a similar nature and import to that of the prophet Ezekiel.

At a time when the inhabitants of Jerusalem had, with some few exceptions, fallen from the pure worship of God into idolatrous practices, the prophet Ezekiel, ix. 1–6, in a vision sees six men, each with a destroying or slaughter weapon in his hand, and among these six he sees a seventh, clothed in linen, with a writer's ink-horn by his side. This man with the writer's ink-horn by his side, is divinely commanded to go through the city and put a mark upon the foreheads of the few faithful worshippers that sighed and lamented for all the idolatrous abominations that were done in the midst of the city. While the six

men with the slaughter weapons in their hands, were divinely commanded to go after him, and without exception, and without pity, smite and slay all who had not the mark upon their foreheads. All this was intended to intimate that a small remnant of faithful servants and worshippers of God, would be preserved through the predicted calamity which was about to befal Jerusalem, for the unlawful and idolatrous worship to which the great majority of her people were addicted. So also the symbolic representation of St. John, foretells that Roman Christians, with the exception of a small remnant or minority, would fall away from a pure Christian worship into idolatrous practices, before that universal and terrible irruption of the Barbarians, which occurred upon the death of Theodosius at the end of the fourth century. It foretells that this remnant of religious worshippers should survive the calamitous period that followed this terrible irruption, and that they should be known and distinguished by the public profession and practice of a pure worship, free from idolatrous innovations.

As in the days of Elijah, when nearly the whole of the ten tribes of Israel had become idolaters, God reserved for himself a remnant of seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. So during this period of the general falling away of Roman Christians into idolatrous practices, God reserved a remnant or minority of faithful servants to perpetuate a pure Christian worship. They would, however, be but a small remnant or minority. The apostacy is here to be understood in its individual (not corporate) character. Verse 4. "And I heard the number of them that were sealed. And there were sealed an hundred and forty-four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel—twelve thousand of every tribe—there being twelve tribes."

As the nation of Israel numbered about five millions, an hundred and forty-four thousand was a small minority.

The different tribes of Israel represent the different Roman Churches or Christian communities, and the persons sealed on

their foreheads represent the comparatively few individuals who should escape the prevailing idolatrous example, and adhere to the profession and practice of a pure Christian worship.

This numerous falling away of Roman Christians into idolatrous practices, occupies the period between Constantine and Theodosius, and was developed before the barbarians at the end of the fourth century, began on every side to break loose upon the empire. The ancient Christians (Waddington, Chap. 8.,) continued to shun with a pious horror, which persecution exasperated, and which time did not mitigate, every approach to paganism and idolatry. "So definite and so broad was the "space which on this point at least separated the two religions, "that it seemed impossible that either of them should overstep "it, or that any compromise could ever be effected between "principles so fundamentally hostile. Yet the contrary result "took place; and a reconciliation, which, in the beginning of "the fourth century, could not easily have been imagined, was "virtually accomplished before its termination. . . . . We "blush when we discover the most distinguished writers of the "fourth century, Athanasius, Eusebius, the historian, Gregory, "Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustin, engaged in "shameful conspiracy against their religion, while they exag- "gerate the merit of the martyrs, assert or insinuate their im- "mediate sanctification, and claim for them, a sort of reverence, "which could not easily be distinguished from worship. In "this age, and from this cause arose the stupid veneration for "bones and relics; it was inculcated and believed, that prayer "was never so surely efficacious, as when offered at the tomb of "some saint or some holy person—the number of such tombs "was then multiplied; at all of them, miracles and prophecies, "and prodigies, and visions were exhibited and recorded; and "the Spirit of the Gospel was forgotten in the practice of for- "bidden ceremonies, and the belief of impious fables. Such "were the unworthy advances which were made by (Roman) "Christianity, and encouraged by her leading ministers, with

"the view to reconcile at least her external differences with "paganism, and no doubt, they were very effectual in alluring "those easy polytheists, whose piety was satisfied with nume- "rous festivals in celebration of the exploits of mortals deified; "for with them, the change was only in the name of the deity, "not in the principles of the religion. And by this shameful "compromise, the Church was filled by numerous converts, who "believed, and who were probably taught to believe, that the "worship which they had deserted, was by no means essentially "dissimilar from that which they had embraced, and who con- "tinued after their admission, to perpetuate and exaggerate "those corruptions, by which alone, the resemblance was "created. . . . . The immediate object of these concessions "to the genius of paganism, was accomplished—to diminish the "numerical display of polytheism, and prematurely to crowd "the Churches and processions with nominal Christians. But "the lasting result has been to darken, and disfigure the features "of Christianity, not in one race only, or for one age, but "through a period of which fourteen centuries have already "been accomplished, and of which we cannot yet foresee the "termination."

It must be observed, that the pagans on their side, made the concession of sacrifice, or at least of immolation, which was the centre of their whole system. They were indulged with a sort of polytheism of saints and martyrs; and even sensible objects of worship were not withheld from them. But these beings were to be approached only with prayer and supplication; and if it were presently found expedient to permit offerings to be made to them, their shrines were never contaminated by the blood of victims. Gibbon, Chap. 28, writes, if in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian or Lactantius had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congre-

gation. It must ingenuously be confessed that the ministers of the Catholic Church "imitated the profane model which they "were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops "persuaded themselves, that the ignorant rustics would more "cheerfully renounce the superstitions of paganism, if they "found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of "Christianity. The religion of Constantine, achieved in less "than a century, the final conquest of the Roman empire; but "the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of "their vanquished rivals. . . . The sublime and simple theology "of the primitive Christians, was gradually corrupted, and the "monarchy of heaven, (already clouded by metaphysical subtle-"ties,) was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, "which tended to restore the reign of polytheism. In the long "period of twelve hundred years, which elapsed between the "reign of Constantine and the Reformation of Luther, the wor-"ship of saints and relicts corrupted the pure and perfect sim-"plicity of the Christian model."

This numerous departure from the Christian faith into the demon or mediator-worship of the pagan Greeks and Romans, is mentioned by St. Paul as a subject of distinct prediction. The spirit of inspiration had made known to him and the Christians of his day, that in the course of the Christian dispensation, certain of its professors would, through the dissimulation and falsehood of monks, be seduced into those errors which then prevailed among the Greeks and Romans, concerning the offices of demons or mediators, and the honour and worship to be rendered to them.

Notwithstanding, however, this numerous apostacy which commenced at so early a date, there have been, in every age since, Christians who have returned and practised a worship, free from these idolatrous innovations. Yet these have hitherto, and do now, constitute but a small minority in comparison with the two hundred millions of Greek and Latin Christians, who have departed from the simplicity of Christian worship, to invo-

cate the mediation and intercession of departed saints, as their ancient fathers did the pagan demons and heroes.

Verses 9–17.—"After this, I beheld, and lo a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying Amen, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are those which are arranged in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

This, besides the one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites reserved for idolatry, the Apostle sees a great multitude of a similar character gathered from different nations.

The great multitude which could not be numbered as the one hundred and forty-four thousand had been, consisted of those, who, in countries and communities professedly heathen, would be found adhering to a pure Christian worship. Though these pure worshippers of God in the communities where they practiced their religion, might constitute but a small minority, yet in the course of successive ages, these small minorities of the dif-

ferent generations and different countries, if gathered together, would constitute an innumerable multitude.

They are clothed with white robes—made white in the blood of the Lamb; they have had recourse to the atonement of Christ, and so applied its merit to themselves, as to appear before God with their sins forgiven or washed away. They have palms in their hands—to signify that they had attained unto salvation and victory, after a severe contest and great tribulation, and hence do they cry with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. They are also represented as admitted to a high state of favour and happiness with God and Christ in the celestial temple, and this is no doubt intended to encourage unto perseverance, all who may be called upon to suffer for the profession and practice of a pure Christianity in the midst of idolatry and infidelity.

This great falling away of Christians of the Roman empire, occurred in the fourth century, and in the next century all the elements of violence and licentiousness were let loose, and the empire was visited with a series of great calamities, among which, was the extinction of the imperial office and authority in Italy and the west. These calamities are the subjects of prediction, and of symbolical representations in the next chapter.

DISCOURSE III.

Rev. viii. 1–6.

"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God: and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

We learn under the sixth seal, that the elements of violence, and devastation, comprehending various nations of Barbarians, were on the eve of being let loose from their restraint, and that a period of judgment and calamity was about to come upon the empire. This period of judgment and calamity begins under the seventh seal. And this fact is strikingly signified by the scenes which take place in the court of heaven, immediately upon the opening of this seal.

In the temple worship at Jerusalem, the high priest on the great day of expiation took fire from the altar of burnt offering in a golden censer, and after taking incense from one of the priests, he proceeded to the golden altar, and there burnt it; the smoke and odour being wafted into the most holy place, to the presence of God, who dwelt between the cherubims, above the mercy seat. But while the high priest was offering this incense on the golden altar, the people or congregation outside, were engaged in silent prayer. This was the acceptable time for God to hear, and the people to offer their petitions to avert his wrath and secure mercy. In the ideal temple exhibited to St. John, the period of silence and petition being ended, the angel takes the censer in which he had burnt incense, and casts

it on the ground, and then follow voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and a shaking.

The casting of the censer upon the ground, as if of no further use, signified that no prayer to avert the divine judgments upon the Roman world, would now be heard and regarded—that the period of entreaty to avert his wrath had gone by, and that heaven would no longer keep silence to listen to prayer for this object. So also the indications of wrath, the voices, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and shaking, which followed the period of silence, confirm the same idea, that heaven was now in a determination or purpose of mind to inflict judgment, and not in a disposition of mind to hear prayer and show mercy.

It had been foretold by St. Paul, (2 Thess., Chap. ii.,) that during the period of the falling away of Christians, there would appear in the temple or Church, a ruler without law—that he would set himself in opposition to, and exalt himself above all human dignities—that he would not appear, however, until a certain power hindering his full developments, should be put out of the way. Though the Apostle does not name, in writing in this epistle, who this hinderer was, yet he informs us, that he had named him to the Thessalonians by word of mouth, and that they knew very well what he meant.

The early fathers, who had it from tradition, inform us that the hinderer was declared by the Apostle to be the Roman emperor or empire, and that he made this declaration by word of mouth, and did not commit it to writing, lest he should expose himself and his religion to the prejudices of the government, by foretelling its removal out of the way, to give place to some rising power in the Christian Church.

And here we find the reason why the primitive Christians made the continuance of the Roman empire a subject of their prayers. They believed that its continuance was hindering and delaying the appearance and development of some haughty and tyrannical ruler in the Christian Church. They termed this ruler, Antichrist, and they expected him to equal Nero in

tyranny and oppression, and hence it was a common saying among them, that Nero was not dead, but that he had retired beyond the Euphrates, and would return as Antichrist. Heaven being now determined beyond the reach of entreaty to execute wrath and judgment upon the Roman world, the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

Verse 7. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

In the language of figures, of fierce winds, stands for hostile devastating armies, storms stand for war and violence. The casting upon the earth of hail and fire mingled with blood, followed with the burning up of the third part of the trees, and of all green grass, gives us to understand, that the winds of desolation were now to be loosed from restraint; that fierce and hostile armies are now to break forth upon the empire in a tempest of desolating war, and bring ruin upon the most flourishing part of the Roman population, including families and persons of rank and wealth.

"The threatening tempests of Barbarians, which was repelled "or suspended on the frontiers was now let loose to subvert the "foundations of Roman greatness." "In the disastrous period "of the fall of the Roman empire, which may be justly dated "from the reign of Valens, (A. D. 376,) the happiness and "security of each individual were personally attacked, and the "arts and labours of ages were rudely defaced by the Barbarians "of Scythia and Germany. The invasion of the Huns, precipi- "tated on the provinces of the West, the Gothic nation which "advanced in less than forty years from the Danube to the "Atlantic, and opened a way by the success of their arms, to "the inroads of so many hostile tribes, more savage than them- "selves. The original principle of motion was concealed in the "remote countries of the North, and the curious observation of

"the pastoral life of the Scythians or Tartars, will illustrate the "latent cause of these destructive emigrations."—(GIBBON.)

After the reign of Theodosius, who died in the year 395, the Barbarians found no adequate power in the empire, to restrain them from invasion and conquest. Accordingly, after his death they began to invade and ravage the empire on all sides, making conquests and settlements from which the Romans could not expel them. In the beginning of the fifth century, both the Germans and the Goths broke loose from their confinement, and precipitated themselves upon the empire. While Greece was invaded and ravaged by the Goths, a furious tempest was excited among the Germans, and "a dark cloud which was collected "along the coast of the Baltic, burst in thunder upon the banks "of the upper Danube, and poured its contents upon Italy and Rome."—(GIBBON.)

Italy, Greece, Gaul, Spain, and even Africa, were in the first part of the fifth century, ravaged by different tribes of barbarians, who waged war with great fierceness—paying but little respect to age, sex, or condition—plundering the unresisting country, and wasting and destroying the fruits of the earth. The calamities inflicted upon the empire by this terrible irruption of the barbarians, fell with destructive force upon many persons and families of wealth, but especially upon the thrifty and agricultural part of the Roman population. The evils which they inflicted upon this part of the population, resembled indeed, the ruin inflicted on trees and grass by a violent tempest, discharging itself in hail and fire, mingled with blood.

Verses 8, 9. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

The great mountain must signify some portion of the Roman population hitherto eminently great and secure. Such as the population of the city of Rome.

"Behold," says God, by the prophet Jeremiah, li. 25, speaking of Babylon, "I am against thee, O destroying mountain, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain."

The people of Babylon were about to fall from their conspicuous and secure condition—and their fall, as we learn in the subsequent part of the chapter, was to be effected by the hostile invasions of the surrounding nations. And such was the fate of the people of the Roman city in the fifth century. The city was repeatedly besieged, taken and sacked by foreign armies, and the emperors consulting their safety were obliged to remove their residence from Rome, to the more secure city of Ravenna. "The loss or desolation of the provinces from the ocean to the "Alps impaired the glory and greatness of Rome, while her "internal prosperity was irretrievably destroyed by the loss "of Africa, which contained the patrimonial estates of her "Senators, and filled her granaries with regular subsidies of "corn." (Gibbon.) Her population from the heights of greatness and security which they once possessed in the Roman world, are now found sunken, and merged in the common mass of provincial cities and subjects, like a great mountain sunken and merged in the sea. When the city of Rome was first sacked by the Goths, under Alaric, it was regarded by the whole empire as a grievous and terrible calamity. This awful catastrophe of Rome, (says Gibbon,) filled the astonished empire with grief and terror; so interesting a contrast of greatness and ruin, disposed the fond credulity of the people to deplore, and even to exaggerate the afflictions of the queen of cities. The clergy who applied to recent events, the lofty metaphors of oriental prophecy, were sometimes tempted to confound the destruction of the capitol with the desolation of the globe. This fall of Rome from her state of greatness and security, was attended with other disasters. And the third part of the sea became blood, and the third part of the creatures which were in

the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. If the land stands for nations and communities of the Latin language, and of the first rank, and the rivers and fountains, for nations and communities in the empire, of a foreign language, and of the second rank, then the sea will represent the common mass of provincial Romans. The blood into which the sea was converted, must correspond to some inimical sentiment with which this class of the population had become imbued; while the mortality in the sea, and the destruction of the ships, may correspond to the extinction of public spirit and the loss of revenue.

Accordingly, we find that at this time, the population in the desolate provinces, had become so disaffected to government, and so averse to the payment of taxes, that the magistracy, who were responsible for the taxes, were retained in their office, only by compulsory laws, while the populace preferred, to the slavery of taxation at home, poverty and freedom among the barbarians.

In the year 418, the Emperor Honorius, issued an edict, for the purpose of convening an annual assembly to represent seven provinces in Gaul, but such was the unfavourable state of feeling towards the Roman government—such the decay of all public or corporate spirit, that the Emperor was surprised to discover, that he must resort to compulsion, if he would secure the attendance of representatives, who seemed to regard the imperial edict as the last and most cruel insult of their oppressors. The same decay of corporate spirit in the provinces, appears from one of the regulations of the Emperor Majorian, A. D. 457, wherein he remarks, "the municipal corporations, the lesser senates, (so antiquity has justly styled them,) deserve to be considered as the heart of the cities, and the sinews of the republic. And yet, so low are they now, reduced by the injustice of magistrates and venality of collectors, that many of their members, renouncing their dignity and their country, have taken refuge in distant and obscure exile

Michelet thus writes of the endeavours of Honorius to revive

Roman public spirit in Gaul; "all was in vain, there was no "arousing a people grown torpid under the weight of their ills. "They had fixed their views elsewhere; and cared not for an "emperor, as powerless for good as for evil. They desired but "death, or at least social death and the invasion of the bar- "barians. They call for the enemy, say the authors of the "time, and long for captivity. Our countrymen who happen "to be among the barbarians, so far from wishing to return, "would rather have us to join them. The wonder is, that all "the poor do not the same. They are only hindered by the "impossibility of carrying their little huts with them." "De- "jection took possession of men's souls; a deadly inertia seized "the whole social body. The people lay down on the ground "in weariness and despair, as the beast of burden lies down "under blows, and refuses to rise. . . . . We have the spec- "tacle of a whole people in mental agony."

Valentian the third, closed his reign in the year 455, two years before the accession of Majorian.

In the conclusion of the chapter which narrates the reign of Valentian, Gibbon notices how strongly the minds of the provincial population were disaffected to the government. As early (Gibbon, Chap. 35,) as the times of Cicero and Verro, it was the opinion of the Roman Augurs, that the twelve vultures, which Romulus had seen, represented the twelve centuries assigned for the fatal period of his city. This prophecy disregarded in the season of health and prosperty, inspired the people with gloomy apprehensions when the twelfth century, clouded with disgrace and misfortune, was almost elapsed; and even posterity must acknowledge, with some surprise, that the arbitrary interpretation of an accidental or fabulous circumstance, has been seriously verified in the downfal of the western empire. But its fall was announced by a clearer omen than the flight of vultures. The Roman government appeared every day less formidable to its enemies, more odious and oppressive to its subjects. The taxes were multiplied with the public distress;

economy was neglected in proportion as it became necessary, and the injustice of the rich, shifted the unequal burden from themselves to the people, whom they defrauded of the indulgences that might sometimes have alleviated their miseries. The severe inquisition which confiscated their goods, and tortured their persons, compelled the subjects of Valentinian, to prefer the more simple tyranny of the barbarians, to fly to the woods and mountains, or to embrace the vile and abject condition of mercenary servants. They abjured and abhorred the name of Roman citizens, which had formerly excited the ambition of mankind. Roman noble spirits became extinct in a great part of the provincial population, when it was found that great Rome had sunk into helplessness, and could no longer protect them or herself.

Verses 10 and 11. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

A star is the symbol of an eminent teacher, and may also stand for the particular doctrine or philosophy which he teaches. The star he mentioned may mean Arius or Arianism. Arius was regarded by many as a burning and shining light—and his doctrine was received by many who were distinguished as much by the superiority of their learning and genius, as by the eminence of their rank and station. Under the Emperors Constantius and Valens, Arianism enjoyed a high position in the Roman world, and constituted a part of the established religion; but in the reign of Theodosius it fell from its high position, being made an object of imperial persecution, so that at the end of the fourth century, the proselytes of Arianism formed an inconsiderable and a declining party in the empire. It had fallen from heaven. "But suddenly it received a new and ex-
"traordinary impulse from an unexpected quarter. The Arians

"oppressed and persecuted by the imperial edicts, took refuge "among those fierce and savage natives who were gradually "overturning the western empire, and found among the Goths, "Suevi, Heruli, Vandals, and Burgundians, a fixed residence, "and peaceful retreat; and as their security animated their "courage, they treated the Catholics with the same violence, "which the latter had employed against them and other heretics, "and harassed and persecuted in various ways, such as professed "their adherence to the Nicene doctrines."—Mosheim, Chap. v. 4, second part of the fifth century.

The persecution of Arianism by Theodosius scattered its disciples among distant and populous nations, and diffused to the same extent the knowledge of his doctrine, and multiplied the number of its professors.

Rivers and fountains of water correspond to nations or communities of a foreign language and literature, ranking next to the Latins or Romans.

The great burning star fell from heaven upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water, when Arianism cast down from the high position which it once held in the empire, lit upon the Goths and other nations, and tinctured their literature with a better ingredient. These nations being now settled in the empire, and brought under the influence of civilization and Christianity, were no longer destructive winds, but rivers and fountains of water. Some of them had been converted in their native forests, and others by being brought into contact with the vanquished Romans; but it so happened that the form of Christianity which they first received, was that of Arianism, and this unfortunate accident "infused a deadly poison in the cup of salvation." Arianism was adopted as the national faith of the warlike converts who were seated on the ruins of the western empire. And this irreconcileable difference of religion was a perpetual source of jealousy and hatred, and the reproach of barbarian was embittered by the more odious epithet of heretic. The distinction of Arian and Trini-

tarian was closely connected with that of foreigner and Roman—conqueror and conquered—so that it combined the bitterness of politics and race as well as of sect—the bitterness of religious, political and national animosity.

And the name of the star is called wormwood, and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter. Many later Christians by imbibing the doctrine and better spirit of Arianism, died to Romanism, and were lost to the Roman party.

Those of the vanquished Romans who were indifferent, would naturally acquiesce in and imbibe the doctrine established by the conquerors, and in this way the empire would lose many of its religious subjects.

Verse 12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as that the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

This is not a destruction of the lights of heaven—but it is a partial obscuration of them—they merely lose a part of their luminous property.

The different powers or orbs in the firmaments of the Roman empire ceased to shine with their former glory and strength. The meaning is that some reverse of fortune was now to befall the high places of power so as to enfeeble their authority and influence, and interrupt the diffusion of knowledge and learning. This was another of the calamities of that period of Roman history which followed the death of Theodosius. He divided the imperial government between his two sons—the one having Rome for his capitol and the other Constantinople. In the year 476, the imperial succession was discontinued in the west, and a Gothic King assumed the government of Italy. "The majesty of Rome was then but faintly represented by the princes of Constantinople, the feeble and imaginary successors of Augustus." There is no period in the annals of the human

race which presents to the historical student a greater scene of confusion, than the century succeeding the overthrow of the western empire, and which includes these four judgments upon the Roman world.

The different hordes of barbarians following no definite plan established separate monarchies in the dismembered provinces, engaged in sanguinary wars, that had no object but plunder, and were too ignorant to form any thing like a political system. After the fall of the western empire the court of Constantinople sunk into obscurity, from which it did not emerge for half a century, when its supremacy was restored during the memorable reign of Justinian. (Taylor's history, modern Chap. 1.)

And this period was a period not only of comparative anarchy but also of comparative ignorance or darkness.

"The barbarous nations, which either spread desolation or "formed settlements in the Roman territories, choked the growth "of those genial seeds which the hand of science had sown in "more auspicious times. These savage invaders who possessed "no other ambition than that of conquests, and considered "military courage as the only source of true virtue and solid "glory, beheld, in consequence, the acts and sciences with the "utmost contempt. Wherever therefore they extended their "conquests, ignorance and darkness followed their steps; and "the culture of science was confined to the priests and monks "alone; and among these learning degenerated from its primi-"tive lustre and put on the most unseemly and fantastic form. "Amidst the seduction of corrupt examples—the charms of "perpetual danger, and the horrors and devastations of war, "the sacerdotal and monastic orders lost all taste for solid "science. (Moshem, Cen. 5, Part 2, Chap. 1.)

"The incursions of the barbarous nations into the greatest "part of the western provinces were extremely prejudicial to "the interests of learning and philosophy, as must be known to "all who have any acquaintance with the history of those un-

"happy times. During those tumultuous scenes of desolation "and horror, the liberal arts and sciences would have been "totally extinguished, had they not found a place of refuge, "such as it was among the bishops and the monastic orders." (Moshem, Cen. 6, Part 2, Chap. 1.)

The same author writes of the 7th century, "Nothing can equal the ignorance and darkness that reigned in this century. The sciences enjoyed no degree of protection, at this time, from kings and princes, nor did they owe any thing to men of high and eminent stations in the empire.

The four judgments upon the Roman world, namely—the invasion of the empire by armies of barbarians—the fall of Rome from its greatness and security into disgrace and weakness—the diffusion of Arianism among the foreign tribes and nations who settled in the empire, and the partial extinction of the authority and influence of the Roman luminaries—Roman rulers and teachers make the period, intervening between the death of Theodosius and the rise of Mahomedanism, a very disastrous period of Roman history. If (says Robertson in his introduction to the History of Charles V.) a man were called to fix upon the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most calamitous and afflicted; he would without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Theodosius the Great, to the establishment of the Lombards in Italy, a period of 176 years. The cotemporary authors who beheld that scene of desolation, labour, and are at a loss for expressions to describe the horror of it. The scourge of God, the destroyer of nations, are the dreadful epithets by which they distinguish the most noted of the barbarous leaders—and they compare the ruin which they had brought on the world to the havoc occasioned by earthquakes, conflagrations or deluges—the most formidable and fatal calamities which the imagination of man can conceive.

The disastrous period of these four judgments was regarded by many cotemporaries, as the period of divine judgment upon

the Roman world. "The political prostration of the western "provinces, overrun by so many savage tribes—the rapid disso- "lution of the old governments without any stability in those "which succeeded them, the subversion of legal security, the "substitution of military and barbarous license—these and "other circumstances, aggravating the usual miseries of con- "quest, occasioned wheresoever they extended, more absolute "wretchedness, both individual and national, than had hitherto "been recorded in the history of man; insomuch that among "those who beheld and shared those afflictions, there were many "who regarded them as special demonstrations of divine wrath. "And as men are ever prone to attribute such chastisements to "the most striking revolution of their own day, and as the sub- "version of the temples of their ancestors was still recent in "their memory, some there were who ascribed the anger of the "gods to the establishment and prevalence of Christianity. . . . "This foolish delusion was immediately and successfully com- "batted by the eloquence of St. Augustin. In his noble com- "position, 'The city of God,' he confuted the error by irrefra- "gable arguments and conclusive appeals to the evidence of "profane history, and inculcated the more reasonable opinion "that the temporal afflictions which God permitted to devastate "the empire, were chastisements inflicted by a just providence "for the correction, not for the destruction of his creatures.

"The error was indeed confuted and presently died away, but "the general dislocation of society which occasioned it must "have suspended for a time the moral energies of man, and the "period of his severest suffering may also have been that of his "deepest depravity." (Waddington, Chap. 9, Sec. 3.)

"St. Augustin during this period of judgment and calamity upon the Roman empire wrote his learned work called the City of God, for the especial purpose of justifying the ways of providence in the destruction of the Roman greatness."

During this calamitous period, "all the subjects of the empire who by the use of the Latin language more particularly

deserved the name and privileges of Romans were oppressed by the disgrace and calamities of foreign conquests."

The four kinds of judgments or calamities that followed the sounding of the first four trumpets were confined for the most part to the Latin or Western, called the third part of the empire, and were inflicted during the fifth and sixth centuries.

These four calamities or woes if consecutive in their beginning became cotemporaneous in their progress; but the fearful calamities or woes next to follow are to be consecutive both in their beginning and in their progress—one is not to begin until the other is ended. And I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, wo, wo, wo, to the inhabiters of the earth—by reason of the voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound. These calamities or woes are chiefly to fall upon the inhabiters of the earth—that is upon the Romans in their religious character, upon Christians of the prevailing or established idolatrous form of Christianity.

DISCOURSE IV.

Rev. ix. 1, 2.

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

The apostle did not (according to the translation of the text) see the star in the act of falling from heaven to earth, but he saw it after it had fallen. This star must be intended to represent Nestorius and his teaching. It fell from heaven to the earth when Nestorius was removed from his patriarchal office

and his teaching and party degraded from all power and influence in the government. The bottomless pit or the well of the abyss or deep, signifies a place or state of confinement and obscurity. The smoky or dark volatile matter escaping from this well represents the blind and fanatical elements of society in the form of bitter and hostile sects let loose from all restraint. The teaching of Nestorius commenced in the empire a controversy that gave vent to these elements, and served to raise them into notice and consideration, and to impair the vigor of the supreme authority and influence in the Roman world, and in this respect they were like as the smoke of a great furnace, which darkened the sun and the air.

It is recorded of Nestorius, that when he was appointed to the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, he accepted and entered upon his office, with the determination to seek out and extirpate all the heretical sects that lurked in the empire. This bitter and persecuting zeal, served however, in his, as well as in other cases, only to increase the evil, and greatly to multiply the number of the sectarians and heretics. The controversy which he commenced, concerning the nature of Christ's existence here on earth, was continued during a period of about three hundred years, and produced no little disturbance or confusion throughout the empire. And we may well suppose, that a controversy which for so long a time, occupied the pen, and the discourses, and the conversation of contentious and angry spirits, would evolve a great quantity of misty reasoning and writing. What for the most part, are the productions which emanate from the angry and bitter spirit of sect or party, but trash, weightless and cloudy, like smoke. By a common figure of speech, the effect is often made to stand for the cause, and so here smoke stands for the materials which produce it, that is, zealots and fanatics.

It appears, that the position assumed by Nestorius and his party in this controversy, was this, that there were in Christ, two distinct persons, as well as two distinct natures. There

was another party who assumed an opposite position, that there was in Christ but one person and one nature. The Orthodox or Catholic doctrine was, that of Christ, in two natures but one person. The authoritative establishment of this doctrine, did not, however, end the controversy, but it became a matter of dispute for fifty years longer, whether Christ, in one person but two natures, was actuated by a single or double will. And it was, while these disputes were distracting the Roman world, that Mahomed fabricated his religion; and as if in contempt of these disputants, he excluded from it the whole mystery of Christ's incarnation, and acknowledged him only as the son of man, and the Apostle of God. And it is remarkable, that during this dispute, the Mahomedans found time to convert Arabia, and to conquer Persia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, and to take the three patriarchal cities, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, and soon after Carthage.

The controversy commenced by Nestorius, as it progressed, seemed to bring into action and notice, all the latent, angry, contentious, and fanatical elements of society. We find evidence of this fact, in the violent proceedings of the several councils which this controversy assembled. One of these councils in particular, conducted itself with so much violence and brutality, that it has been stigmatized in every age of the Church since, as the assembly of robbers. One of the emperors, by the publication of an Edict of Union, attempted to extinguish the dissension and animosity which this controversy had occasioned among his Christian subjects, but to the disgrace of the disputants, says the historian, and almost to the scandal of human nature, it proved that an attempt, judiciously conceived by a benevolent prince to compose the religious differences of his subjects, produced no other effect, than to inflame the character and multiply the ground of dissension. And that unhappy result was not in this case, attributable to the infliction of any civil penalties in the arbitrary enforcement of the decree, but solely to the vehemence of the passions engaged on both sides,

which had hardened the greater number against any representations of wisdom or reason, and even against the ordinary influence of their human feelings. (Waddington.)

The angry feelings, and the hostile sects, which this controversy evolved, impaired the authority of the emperors, and of general councils. These hostile sects sought refuge in the eastern countries, beyond the Roman empire, where their number, and their enmity against the Roman government, prepared them in the course of time, to form an alliance with the Mahomedan invaders, and to cast their weight in the downfall of the eastern empire.

Thus while the smoke of this long and angry controversy was overspreading the firmament of the Roman world and shutting out the light of the sun, the Mahomedans in the form of locusts appear, descending from the cloud of smoke and lighting upon the earth—that is, appear coming out from among these fanatical elements and inflicting evil upon the Romans.

Verses 3–6. "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the mark of God on their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die and death shall flee from them." These words, explain the nature of the mission committed to these locusts. Their mission was not so much to ruin the flourishing and wealthy portion of Roman subjects, as it was to annoy the idolatrous part of the population—that is, those Christians who had fallen away from a pure Christian worship, into idolatrous additions and innovations. They were commanded or commissioned, to sting and torment these idolaters, but not to kill them—that is, not to destroy the idolatrous

Roman corporate life or spirit with which they were actuated. They were not to succeed in forcing out of the minds of these idolaters, those Roman ideas and prejudices which sustained in them, the corporate spirit or life of Roman idolatry.

Annoyed by the Mahomedans, these Roman idolaters would desire and endeavor to free themselves from the corporate idolatrous spirit and ideas and prejudices peculiar to Romans, but should not succeed, as we shall see hereafter.

The locusts are to hurt men for a given time. Their power was to hurt men during a period of five months or an hundred and fifty days, which, when relating to judgments and calamities inflicted, as we learn from Ezekiel, mean, in the language of symbolical prophecy, so many years.

We have also, a description of the form and appearance of these locusts, with the name of their king.

Verses 7–11. "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle, and on their heads were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men, and they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

Arabia is considered as the native country of the locusts, and there can be do doubt that the locusts here, are intended to represent the Mahomedans, Arabians—or Saracens, as they were called by the Greeks and Latins. "It has been remarked, that the Saracens have made inroads into all those parts of Christendom, where the natural locusts are wont to be seen and known to do mischief: that where the locusts are seldom seen, there the Saracens stayed little. Where the natural locusts are often seen, there the Saracens abode most, and where they breed most,

there the Saracens had their beginning and greatest power." (Bishop Newton.) The shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle. This is intended to represent the Mahomedans as soldiers, eager for war and conquests. Their armies, moreover, chiefly consisted of cavalry. Arabia, in the opinion of naturalists, is the genuine and original country of the horse. They had on their heads crowns like gold, to signify that they would succeed in acquiring wealth and dominion, and no nation ever conquered so many kingdoms in so short a space of time.

Their faces were as the faces of men. As a sense of religion is the distinguishing character of humanity, the human face, we may suppose intended, to represent these Saracen soldiers in their religious aspect and profession. And the professed object for which they took the sword and carried on war, was the propagation of religion. Their wars were professedly religious wars, intended to force their religion upon an infidel and idolatrous world.

They had hair as the hair of women, to signify their subjection to government would be more the result of good will and affection than of force. The long hair of woman, according to St. Paul, indicates, in the language of signs, her subjection to the authority of the husband. The government of the Saracens was of a patriarchal nature. The authority to which they rendered respect and obedience, was that of superior wisdom and age. Perhaps the faces of men and the hair of women, were intended to signify that while their obedience would be of this free and amiable nature, their minds should be of a courageous and manly character.

"In every tribe of the Arabians, superstition or gratitude or fortune, has exalted a particular family above the heads of their equals. The dignities of Sheich and Emir invariably descend in this chosen race, but the order of succession is loose and precarious, and the most worthy or aged of the noble kinsmen are preferred, to the simple though important office of composing disputes by their advice, and guiding valor by their example.

The momentary junction of several tribes, produces an army,—their more lasting union constitutes a nation, and the supreme chief, the Emir of Emirs, whose banner is displayed at their head, may deserve, in the eye of strangers, the honors of the kingly name. If the Arabian princes abuse their power, they are quickly punished by the desertion of their subjects who had been accustomed to a mild and parental jurisdiction. Their spirit is free, their steps are unconfined, the desert is open and the tribes are held together by a mutual and voluntary compact. The grandfather of Mahomet and his lineal ancestors, appear in foreign and domestic transactions as the princes of their country, but they reigned like Pericles at Athens, or the Medici at Florence, by the opinion of their wisdom and integrity. In the more simple state of the Arabs the nation is free, because each of her sons disdains a base submission to the will of a master. The sense of his own importance, teaches him to accost his equals without levity and his superiors without awe. The liberty of the Saracens survived their conquests. The first caliphs indulged the bold and familiar language of their subjects: they ascended the pulpit to persuade and edify the congregation; nor was it before the seat of empire was removed to the Tigris, that the Abbassides adopted the proud and pompous ceremonial of the Persian and Byzantine courts." (Gibbon, Chap. 50.)

They have teeth as the teeth of lions. They are strong and courageous in seizing and devouring the substance of their enemies. Nothing will be able to escape their grasp and power. There is a generation, says Solomon, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth and the needy from among men.

"The Arabians pretend that in the division of the earth, the "rich and fertile climates were assigned to the other branches "of the human family, and that the posterity of the outlaw "Ishmael, might recover by fraud and force, the portion of in-"heritance of which he had been unjustly deprived. . . Their "neighbours, since the remote times of Job and Sesostris, have

"been the victims of their rapacious spirit. The temper of a "people thus armed against mankind, was doubly inflamed by the "domestic license of rapine, murder and revenge."

And they had breast-plates as it were breast-plates of iron.

The breast-plate, is a piece of defensive armour to protect the heart, and the heart is used in Scripture, to signify the seat of thought, of courage and resolution, as well as of affection.

St. Paul speaks of the breast-plate of faith and love, and of the breast-plate of righteousness. Faith in the righteousness, justification—forgiveness of God,—and the affection or love which this faith begets in the Christian, serve to protect him from despair and discouragement.

The iron breast-plate to protect the heart, seems here to signify, some principles of belief, steeling or hardening their minds against feelings of discouragement or fear or weakness, in their opposition to idolatry and infidelity.

Perhaps we explain the meaning of the iron breast-plates when we say of the Arab, in the language of the historian whom we have already quoted, "His breast is fortified with the austere virtues of courage, patience and sobriety. Mahomed helped to fortify the breasts of his soldiers with this iron courage, patience and sobriety, when he taught them the doctrines of fatalism and promised paradise to every one that fell in battle.

"The sword," says he, "is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood, shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer. Whoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven. At the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion and odoriferous as musk, and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims." Thus death became to them an object of desire and hope.

"The belief also, in the tenets of fatalism and predestination, "has in every age exalted the courage of the Saracens and Turks. "The first companions of Mahomet advanced to battle with "a fearless confidence: there is no danger where there is

"no chance: they were ordained to perish in their beds—or "they were safe and invulnerable amidst the darts of the ene- "my."—Gibbon. . . . Their belief in fatalism and the prospect of paradise served in the day of battle as an iron defence to their enthusiastic and intrepid minds.

And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. These words describe their numerous armies as proceeding with great rapidity in the career of conquests.

Verse 11. "And they had tails like unto scorpions and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months."

The Lord, says the prophet Isaiah, will cut off from Israel the head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail. The tails of the locusts, therefore, represent Mahomedans in their false teaching, and these tails were endowed with the sting and venom of scorpions, to signify that their false teaching would include some doctrine very annoying and tormenting to the minds and feelings of the idolatrous Christians of the empire. The king over them is Mahomed and his caliphs or successors. He is called the Angel of the Well of the Deep, because he is the apostle of the deluded and fanatical, whose native region is that of ignorance and darkness—the well of the abyss. In Mahomed, the deluded and fanatical portion of the world, have had a representative and leader, unrivalled in successful error and imposition. And we need not be surprised that in an age of ignorance when the fanatical and contentious spirit of sect and party was extensively diffused, that a multitude of proselytes should embrace the doctrines or the passions of an eloquent fanatic. The name given to this apostle of fanatics, is that of the destroyer. Mahomed taught that he was commanded by divine revelation, to propagate his religion by the sword: to destroy the monuments of idolatry, and without

regarding the sanctity of days and months, to pursue the unbelieving nations of the earth.

But while the Mahomedans were falsely teaching that God commanded them by an express revelation, to chastise and exterminate the crime of idolatry with the sword, they at the same time, with good reason, charge their crime upon the Christians of the established religion of the empire. And it was this false teaching, accompanied with this well founded charge, and the unexampled success of their arms, that constituted the story with which they annoyed and tormented these idolatrous Roman Christians.

"The worship of images had stolen into the Church by insen-
"sible degrees, and each petty step was pleasing to the super-
"stitious mind, as productive of comfort, and innocent of sin.
"But in the beginning of the eighth century, in the full mag-
"nitude of the abuse, the more timorous Greeks, were awakened
"by an apprehension, that under the mask of Christianity, they
"had restored the religion of their fathers; they heard, with
"grief and impatience, the name of idolaters; the incessant
"charge of the Jews and Mahometans, who derived from the
"law and the koran, an immortal hatred to graven images, and
"all relative worship. The servitude of the Jews might curb
"their zeal, and depreciate their authority, but the triumphant
"Mussulmans, who reigned at Damascus, and threatened Con-
"stantinople, cast into the scale of reproach, the accumulated
"weight of truth and victory. The cities of Syria, Palestine, and
"Egypt, had been fortified with the images of Christ, his mother,
"and his saints; and each city presumed on the hope or promise
"of miraculous defence. In a rapid conquest of ten years, the
"Arabs subdued those cities and their images, and in their
"opinion, the Lord of hosts, pronounced a decisive judgment
"between the adoration and contempt of these mute and inani-
"mate idols. In this season of distress and dismay, the elo-
"quence of the monks was exercised in defence of images, and

"they attempted to prove, that the sin and schism of the "greatest part of the Orientals, had forfeited the favour, and "annihilated the virtue of these precious symbols. But they "were now opposed by the murmurs of many simple and "rational Christians, who appealed to the evidence of texts, of "facts, and of the primitive times, and secretly desired the "reformation of the Church." (Gibbon, Chap. 49.)

In the year 718, the Emperor Leo, the Isaurian, commenced his reign. He had been educated among Christians, not accustomed in their worship to the use of images. This education, his reason, and perhaps his intercourse with the Jews and Arabs, had inspired him with a hatred of images. Unable to bear any longer the excessive height to which the Greeks carried their superstitious attachment to the worship of images, and the sharp railleries, and serious reproaches, which this idolatrous service drew upon the Christians from the Jews and Saracens, he resolved by the most vigorous proceedings, to root out at once this growing evil. He issued an edict requiring the removal of all images from churches. This edict was resisted by the Bishop of Rome, and this resistance led in the year 730, to the revolt of Italy, and its separation from the eastern empire. The Emperor persisted in his project with great perseverance, and with some prospect of success, until his death. His son and successor, also persevered in the same effort. In the year 754, he assembled a general council in the suburbs of Constantinople. This council was composed of the respectable number of three hundred and thirty-eight bishops. They decreed by a unanimous subscription, that image worship was a corruption of Christianity, and that images used for such a purpose, should be broken or erased, and hence they were called Iconoclasts, or image breakers. The bishops of Rome, aided by the monks, took the side of the venerable images; and this emperor, during the whole course of his reign, was employed in contention with idols, and with the pernicious influence of Rome and the monks, who protected and supported them. Soon after the death of this

emperor, the administration of public affairs fell into the hands of the Empress Irene. "Immediately the religious policy of the palace was changed; and as fifty years of vigorous opposition had not availed to extirpate corruptions which were the gradual growth of four centuries, the change was hailed with delight by a large proportion of the people."

In the year 787, a general council was assembled at Nice, by which the images were re-instated in their former honours through the united exertions of the monks, and the mob, and the Pope, and the Empress. This last public act of the united Greek and Roman communions, established idolatry as the law of the catholic established Church.

Some of the emperors who succeeded Irene, did not respect the decisions of this council, but used their authority and influence to eradicate this corrupt form of worship. But in the year 842, the Empress Theodora re-established the authority of the seventh council, and replaced the images with so firm a hand, that they have never since been shaken.

They were not, however, so firmly established, but that another council assembled at Constantinople, in the year 879, in further confirmation of idolatry. And it was, according to Moshiem, after this council, that the festival was instituted, called the feast of orthodoxy, for the purpose of preserving the annual memory of the triumph of images, which the superstitious Greeks regarded as the most signal blessing derived to them from the immediate interposition of heaven.

Among the Latins, as well as among the Greeks, efforts had been made, both by councils and by rulers, to free themselves from the idolatrous influence and spirit of Rome, but without success. The party most anxious to free themselves from the law and charge of idolatry, did not understand the nature and extent of their departure from the purity of Christian worship. "In the long night of superstition, they had wandered far away from the simplicity of the gospel; nor was it easy for them to discern the clue, and tread back the mazes of the labyrinth."

While they were contending against the use of images in religious worship, they were not aware that when they were invocating departed saints, and imploring their assistance and intercessions, they were practicing the demon or mediator worship of their forefathers, the ancient Greeks and Romans. They sincerely desired, and endeavoured to destroy in themselves, the Roman corporate spirit and influence, so far as they were idolatrous, but they were not sufficiently enlightened in this gospel, to effect the objects of their desires and efforts. They sought death and did not find it, and they desired to die, and death fled from them. The influence of Rome could not be overcome. This long controversy on the subject of image worship, evinced how much the feelings of Roman Christians were hurt, by the teaching and reproaches of the victorious Mahometans. Their power was to hurt them five months, one hundred and fifty days, one hundred and fifty years. This is a round sum, and it may not be intended to measure very precisely the period of their power to hurt. But if we may measure this period by the controversy on image worship—and we began this controversy by the opposition of the Pope to the imperial edict, and the revolt of Italy in the years 728–30, and end it in the year 879, when a council holden at Constantinople, completed the triumph of idolatry; we shall have a period of one hundred and fifty years to verify the prediction. It was at the close of this period, moreover, that the Mahomedans completed the conquest of Sicily, by taking Syracuse. And after the Saracens had annexed Sicily to their empire, they ceased, in consequence of their divisions, to conquer any countries of importance, and the design of conquest and dominion was degraded to a repetition of predatory inroads.

And it is remarkable, that the capture of Syracuse was the fault of the mariners of the imperial fleet, who had been detained at Constantinople, in building a Church to the Virgin Mary, instead of sailing to the besieged Syracusans. It was the greatest of the crimes "of the ancient directors of the Christian

"Church, and that which more peculiarly brought down upon "it the chastisement from Arabia, that they filled the temples "with their detested idols, and obtruded them upon the eyes, "and into the hands of the most ignorant. Nor can their "advocates plead the necessity of this conduct, for the example "of the Mahomedan faith alone, has proved that a people may "be barbarous, without being idolatrous, when idolatry is dis- "couraged by the ministers of religion." (Waddington, Chap. ii. Sec. 6.) The Mahomedans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. . . . .The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol—the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue; and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion. The votaries of Ali have indeed consecrated the memory of their hero, his wife, and his children, and some of the Persian doctors pretend that the divine essence was incarnate in the person of the Imams; but their superstition is universally condemned by the Sonnites, and their impiety has afforded a seasonable warning against the worship of saints and angels. (Gibbon.)

One woe is past, and beheld there come two woes more hereafter.

DISCOURSE V.

Rev. ix. 13–21.

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which held the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

Under the sixth seal the Apostle saw the four winds of heaven, held and restrained by four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth. Here under the sixth trumpet, four angels, having at their command an immense army of cavalry, are seen, bound in or at the great river Euphrates, that is, confined and restrained in the presence of the Greek nation—for the great river Euphrates stands for the Greek people—being the most considerable people of a foreign language, forming a constituent part of the Roman empire.

If the breaking loose of the four winds of the earth from the four angels who held them in their power, represents that general irruption or breaking loose of the barbarians which began in the fifth century, so the loosing of the four angels having at their command an immense army of cavalry, but bound in the presence of the Greek nation, represents that general calamitous

irruption of those different tribes or nations called Turks or Turkmans.

In the tenth century, the empire of the Saracens, broken into fragments, began to decline and was succeeded by the empire of the Turks under the Seljukian dynasty.

The greatness and unity of the first Turkish empire expired in the person of Malek Shah. His vacant throne was disputed by his brother and his four sons, and after a series of civil wars, the treaty which reconciled the surviving candidates, confirmed a lasting separation in the Persian dynasty—the eldest and principal branch of the house of Seljuk. The three younger dynasties were those of Kerman, of Syria, and of Rorem. (Gibbon, chap. 57.) About the time that the Turkish empire was thus divided, the Crusades began and the power of the Turks was kept under restraint by those immense armies which Latin Europe poured forth upon Asia, for the purpose of rescuing Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Turks. And as the Crusades begun to decline, the Moguls and Tartars from an opposite quarter, under Zengis Khan and his successors, served to keep in check the Turkish powers. When, however, in the thirteenth century, the Crusades of the Latins ceased and the empire of the Moguls lost its unity and vigor, the Turks who were divided and bound in the presence of the Greek nation, were left free to re-establish their empire in unity and vigor, and to assail and exterminate the idolatrous Christians. The ceasing of the Crusades and the decline of the Mogul power, gave free scope to the rise and progress of the Ottoman Turkish empire. Thus the Turks, who were seated in proximity to the Greeks with their power at first divided between four different dynasties, were confined and restrained on the one side by the Latin Crusades, and on the other, by the invasions and power of the Moguls and Tartars, until in the fourteenth century, the Turkish empire rose again in renewed unity and vigor under the Ottoman dynasty.

These divided Turks represented by the four angels, are

declared to be prepared at an hour and day and month and year, to slay the third part of men. They were ready at any time—at a moments warning—they were impatient to be let loose upon the Romans, that they might kill and exterminate idolatry from among them. The Turkish leaders were prepared to assail the Romans, the moment that the obstacles in their way were removed and they were left free to pursue the course of conquest. They were ready and eager to execute this coveted work, at or for any time—any hour or day or month or year —they were only waiting for the time which was to free them from restraint.

The Turks were more impatient and enthusiastic to exterminate Christian dogs and idolaters, and they were less tolerant to the religion of the Christians, than were the original Mahometans.

It was not, however, until the Turks, under the Seljukian dynasty, had followed the common law of the Asiatic dynasties and had gone the unceasing round of valour, greatness, discord, degeneracy and decay, that their power was again united under the Ottoman Sultans and found equal to the propagation of their religion by war and conquest.

These Turks are represented as an immense army of horsemen. And the number of the army of horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand, (two myriads of myriads) and I heard the number of them. When Mahmud, a Turkish Sultan, inquired of one of his chiefs of the race of Seljuk, what supply of men he could furnish for military service, the reply of the chief was: "If you send one of these arrows into our camp, fifty thousand of your servants will mount on horseback." "And if that number" continued Mahmud, "should not be sufficient?" "Send," replies the chief, "this second arrow to the horde of Balik and you will find fifty thousand more." "But," continued the Sultan, "if I should stand in need of the whole force of your kindred tribes?" "Despatch my bow," was the last reply of the Seljukian chief, "and as it is circulated around,

the summons will be obeyed by two hundred thousand horse." These Seljukian Turks (afterwards collected into an army of conquerors under Toquil, the grandson of Seljuk,) began about the eleventh century, to be formidable to the Greek empire.

In the middle of the eleventh century, the Greeks were suddenly assaulted by this unknown race of barbarians, who united the Scythian valour with the fanaticism of new proselytes to Mahommed, and the art and riches of a powerful monarchy. "The myriads," (says the historian,) "of Turkish horse, overspread a frontier of six hundred miles from Taurus to Arzeorum, and the blood of thirteen thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet. Yet the arms of Togrul did not make any deep or lasting impression on the Greek empire. European battles, until the time of Napoleon, were but petty skirmishes if compared to the numbers that have fought and fallen in the battles of Asia. Seven hundred thousand Moguls and Tartars are said to have marched under the standard of Zengis and his sons. In certain vast plains of Asia, they were encountered by the Turkish Sultan, with an army of four hundred thousand soldiers, and in the battle of the first day, there were slain one hundred and sixty thousand on the part of the Turks. Nearly two centuries after Zengis, Tamerlane, another Mogul emperor, encountered the Turkish power under Bajacet. Eight hundred thousand men were enrolled on the military list of Tamerlane, while Bajacet had collected a force of four hundred thousand, horse and foot.

Verse 17. "And thus I saw the horses in the vision and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire and of jacinth and brimstone—having their breasts, their human feelings fortified by a persecuting, fanatical and angry spirit. The heads of the horses were as the heads of lions to denote the despotic and fierce character of their dominion. Out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed by the fire and by the smoke and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths—they breathed forth a

most destructive spirit of persecution, fanaticism and vindictiveness. The flame of bitter and angry opposition to idolatry burnt in them with a most fierce and destructive rage, and proved fatal to the religion of those Romans who came in contact with it. The extremely hostile spirit which these Turks breathed towards the conquered Christians, are evinced in the expedients to which they resorted for the purpose of obtaining soldiers. "The conquered Christian provinces became the perpetual seminary of the Turkish army. At first the royal fifth of the Christian captives was taken for this purpose, and when this number was diminished by the less frequency of conquests, an inhuman tax of the fifth child or of every fifth year, was rigorously levied on the Christian families." At the age of twelve or fourteen years, the most robust youths were torn from their parents, and from that moment, were clothed, taught and maintained for the public service. The Janizaries, those formidable Turkish soldiers, consisted at first of Christian youths who had been educated in the Turkish religion and arms. Their Turkish education so killed in them all feeling of regard to the religion of their countrymen, that they fought against them with all the zeal of proselytes. Indeed, wherever the Turkish spirit and influence came in contact with Roman Christianity, it proved highly destructive to the latter.

These idolatrous Christians were unable to maintain their religion against the perpetual insults of their persecuting, fanatical and incensed victors, nor could they stem that torrent of barbarism and ignorance which rushed in with the triumphant arms of the Turks and overspread Greece with a fatal rapidity. The Turks did not altogether prohibit the public exercise of the Christian worship, yet such was the deadly influence of their hostility towards it, that many Christians were overcome by it and became converts to the religion of their conquerors.

And hence, those who retained the possession of Christianity had the mortification of seeing their friends and kindred apostatise to Mahomedan imposture.

A large proportion of Christians, by coming in contact with the Turkish religious spirit, and inhaling its influence, so fatal to Roman religious life, died to their former religious profession and sympathies.

In the 19th verse it is declared of these horses, that their tails were like unto serpents and had heads, and that with them they do hurt. Their power to kill was in the fire, smoke and brimstone issuing from their mouths, but their power to hurt was in the serpent heads of their tails. Their tails represent them in their character as teachers of imposture.

The Turks, like the Saracens, falsely taught a revelation from God as their authority and warrant for exterminating idolatry by the sword, while at the same time they rightly charged the Greek and Latin Christians with this crime. And it was this imposture, accompanied with this just charge and the victorious power of the Turks, which, as in the case of the Saracens, so much annoyed these Roman Christians. It must be noticed, that as the old Roman empire had been perpetuated by the Greeks, they thought themselves as much entitled to the name of Romans as were the Latins or western people.

Verses 20, 21. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, (demons or mediators,) and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The evils which the Saracens inflicted upon these Christians, for the declared purpose of chastising them for their idolatrous form of worship, so far from curing them of their idolatry, served only to confirm and harden them in it; so that when the Saracen chastisement was coming to a close, we find that the Romans had succeeded to add to the invocation of departed saints the use of images in their religious worship, and to

establish such idolatrous worship in full public authority and practice.

Neither did the chastisement inflicted by the Turks have any better influence upon them than that of the Saracens. Hence we find that when the Turkish power began to decline and ceased to be formidable, the Latin Christians had added to the worship of images and of the martyrs, the worship of the elements in the Lord's supper, having, by a general council, established the doctrine of transubstantiation. According to this doctrine, they fall down to the elements in the Lord's supper, not merely as being the divinely appointed representatives, but as being by transubstantiation the very body and soul and divinity of Christ.

It may be observed, that opposing sects or parties, in those matters which are the subjects of contest between each other, invariably run into extremes and become bigotted and fanatical. Such was the effect which the opposition of the Mahomedan party, both under the Saracens and the Turks, had upon the Roman Christian party. Idolatry was the great subject of contest between the two parties, and on this subject the Christian party was urged into the extreme of madness and folly. The opposition of the Saracens and Turks, so far from bringing them to a sense of their grievous departure from the pure worship of primitive Christianity, and inducing them to repent and return back to the point whence they had strayed, only served to urge them on further in their apostacy. They repented neither of their demon and image worship, nor of their murders in shedding the blood of those whom they called heretics, nor of their sorceries or cheats in working miracles, nor of their fornication or licentious practices; nor of their thefts in those exactions and impositions by which they fraudulently drew immense treasures from the nations. These calamities, inflicted by the Saracens and Turks upon the Greek and Latin Christians, were inflicted upon them for their idolatry. "As the Greek Churches were

"first in the crime, so they were likewise first in the punish-
"ment. At first they were visited by the plague of the Sara-
"cens, but this working no change or reformation, they were
"again chastised by the still greater plague of the Othmans;
"were partly overthrown by the former, but entirely ruined
"by the latter. What churches were then remaining which
"were guilty of the like idolatry but the western or those in
"communion with Rome? And the western were not at all
"reclaimed by the ruin of the eastern, but persisted still in the
"worship of saints, and what is more, the worship of images,
"which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; and the world is
"witness to the completion of this prophecy to this day."
(Bishop Newton.)

The Greek Roman idolatry and despotism still live and flourish among the Russians.

DISCOURSE VI.

Rev. x. xi.

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head; and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open; and he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth; and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried seven thunders uttered their voices; and when the seven thunders had uttered their voices I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again and said, Go take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it up my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophecy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

Before the seventh seal was opened we were informed by a kind of digression, that the fall of Paganism, as the established religion, would be attended with an apostacy among the professors of Roman Christianity; so now here, before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, we have another digression for the purpose of giving us additional matter concerning this apostacy, informing us that the men of the apostacy were, during a certain period, to domineer over the worship and polity of the Christian Church; and that during this period they would not only be annoyed for their idolatry by the Saracens and Turks,

but also by some form of protestation and opposition existing among themselves. Both St. Paul and Daniel have made this apostacy a subject of distinct prediction. Daniel has repeatedly mentioned the period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, during which it was to prevail an overbearing corporate period. As this apostacy had been so distinctly foretold by Daniel, as well as by St. Paul, it is no doubt for this reason represented in this vision of St. John, as contained in a little book open.

This little book open is seen in the hand of a mighty angel that had come down from heaven, with a cloud about him—a rainbow above him—his face shining as the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. This angel represents Christ, as we learn from the third verse in the next chapter. The cloud and rainbow above it represents his fidelity to his word and promise; the sun his glory and majesty; his feet represent his ways or course of conduct; while the fiery color of his feet intimate that his conduct or ways were now to be of a punitive character. He sets one foot upon the earth or land, that we may understand that the whole population of the earth are subject to his power and judgment.

And when he cries with a loud voice, as the roaring of a lion, and the voices of seven thunders follow, we are to understand that he is displeased and intends to execute judgment upon those who had apostatised from a pure Christianity. What was the nature of the displeasure, or judgments, or contents, which the seven thunders uttered, we are not informed, for the apostle was commanded by a voice from heaven, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered and write them not."

The apostle then sees the angel who stands upon the sea and upon the land, lift up his hand to heaven and swear by him that liveth forever and ever, the creator of heaven and earth and sea and all things in them, that the time for putting an end to the apostacy and for finishing the mystery of God should constitute the first part of the period comprehended in the seventh trum-

pet. It was a subject of wonder to Daniel, that under the dispensation of the Messiah, God should allow revealed religion to be corrupted and oppressed for so long a period. The circumstances of affliction and degradation in which the true religion was to be found during this period, are termed by the prophet Daniel, wonders—things strange and mysterious. And he heard an angel standing on the waters of the river and holding up both his hands to heaven, swear by him that liveth forever and ever, that this period of wonders—this period of the mystery or strange things of God, should be a period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, and that the power of the people of God ceasing at the end of this period to be scattered or divided, all the desirous things which God had promised in relation to his kingdom or church, would then be in a course of completion.

So here Christ in the form of a mighty angel with one foot upon the water and another upon the land, and having in his hand a little open book as relating to the apostacy already made known, raises his hands to heaven and swears by the Creator of all things who liveth forever, that the time that is, the predicted one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the apostacy, should expire before the seventh angel began to sound, and that as soon as this angel began to sound, should begin the judgment of God for the extermination of the apostacy, and for the introduction of a glorious period of blessedness, as he had promised to his servants the prophets.

As this strange, domineering apostacy of one thousand two hundred and sixty years had before been made known and was contained in the Sacred Scriptures, this is the reason why the little book as containing this knowledge is represented to be open —not sealed. And if we suppose this little open book to be symbolic of knowledge before published concerning a tyrannical apostacy of one thousand two hundred and sixty years and a subsequent period of blessedness, we may understand why the

angel should lift up his hand with this book in it and swear as he did, concerning the certainty of the ending of these one thousand two hundred and sixty years and the finishing of the mystery of God.

And further supposing that this little open book was symbolic of previous revelations concerning this long, deplorable period of the apostacy, we may perceive the meaning and force of the following circumstances related by the apostle in reference to himself. He was commanded by a voice from heaven to take the book out of the hand of the angel and to eat it up, and while eating it, it was in his mouth sweet as honey, but as soon as he had eaten it his stomach became bitter.

It was pleasant as an object of curiosity to know and understand rightly what God had foretold by his prophets in relation to the future history of true religion, but if this knowledge was pleasant as it was entering into the mind, it had a contrary effect after it had once entered. It was a bitter reflection that for so long a period the religion of heaven should be in the hands of its perverse corrupters, while those who professed and maintained it in its primitive simplicity, should be objects of persecution and oppression. This indeed, was bitter knowledge to those who lived thousands of years ago, but it need not be so bitter to us who know that the greater part of this deplorable period has passed away.

After the apostle had eaten the little book and found it bitter to digest, the angel who had given him the little book, after telling him that he, the apostle, must yet prophecy before or concerning many people and nations and tongues and kings, proceeds to give him more particular information concerning these bitter things—this deplorable period. And this information we have in the next chapter.

Rev. xi., 1–2. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying, rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein. But the

court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not, for it is given unto the gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

The temple and the altar and them that worship therein, represent internal worship and worshippers, while the court without the temple represents external worship.

The temple and the altar and the worshippers therein are measured, to signify that the worship and character of these internal worshippers would correspond with the internal or spiritual worship prescribed by the word and commandments of God, and bear measurement or inspection accordingly. The court without is left out and not measured, being given to the Gentiles, to signify that the external worship of the Church would not bear the measurement or inspection of the word and commandment of God and would be in the power and possession of idolaters who are here termed Gentiles or heathen. And not only is the outer court to them, but the holy city they are to tread under foot for a given time. The holy city with its streets, represents ecclesiastical polity with its laws and ordinances. The polity of the Christian church will be in the possession of these idolaters and subject to their degrading rule and control for the time specified—forty-two months of years—that is, one thousand two hundred and sixty years, and during this period there is to be a succession of extraordinary teachers to protest against the worship and innovations of these idolatrous Christians.

Verses 3 and 4. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth, (Judea—the holy land.)

In the time of Ahab the great majority of the ten tribes had fallen away into an idolatrous worship, yet there was a small minority or remnant of seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, and besides this minority, there

was also a prophet left who protested against the prevailing idolatry—namely, Elijah, the Tishbite, the Reformer. So, under the apostacy of the Roman Christians, there is left a small remnant or minority of one hundred and forty-four thousand of pure worshippers, with two prophets, to protest or witness for Christ, against those who had fallen away from him, by invoking other mediators beside himself.

Under the old dispensation, when the majority of the nation had gone astray from the authorized worship of God, there appeared extraordinary teachers called prophets, who made it their business to reclaim their countrymen from their idolatry. The priests were the regular teachers and ministers while the prophetic office was intended for peculiar occasions and purposes. Their office was not confined to the prediction of future events, it was their province to instruct the people in the word of God and especially to expose their departures from it, and to reclaim and reform them. They were the bulwarks of the old religion against the innovations and tyranny of the civil magistrate, as well as against the corruption and idolatry of the priests and people. Their office was that of protestants and reformers. By these prophets God had protested unto the nation of Israel from the time of their deliverance from Egypt—rising up early and protesting, saying obey my voice. (JER. ii. 7.) The prophets were the witnesses of God in this sense, that they faithfully declared His displeasure and threatenings against the impiety and idolatry of their countrymen. And hence it was necessary, that they should be men of a bold and courageous spirit, who would cry aloud and spare not; who would lift up their voice like a trumpet and shew the people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins.

Behold, says God to the prophet Ezekiel, I have made thy face strong against their faces and thy forehead strong against their forehead. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead, fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

After the separation of the ten tribes, (in the reign of Rehoboam,) from the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, there was a succession of prophets kept up in each of these two kingdoms; one in the kingdom of Judah, and another in the kingdom of Israel.

According to this prediction of St. John, there is something corresponding to these two successions of protestors and reformers, to occur in the Christian Church during the long apostacy under consideration.

The two witnesses of Christ—the two protestant teachers of Christianity, evidently signify, there would be in the Christian Church, a succession of bold and courageous spirits, who would protest against the prevailing apostacy, and preach up the necessity of reformation.

This succession of men is represented to be two-fold, because their testimony will be two-fold; they will set forth the revelation and protestation of God against the idolatrous innovators, both under the law and under the gospel. Both the law and the gospel reveal Christ as the only mediator, the only intercessor, who, by his sacrifice and merits, can secure favour for us in heaven. One great error of the ancient heathen nations, was, that they had a great number of deceased men, whom they invoked for their influence and aid, under the notion, that they had, after their death, been promoted to the office of mediators or intercessors between men and the celestial gods. The testimony of God concerning Christ, both under the law and under the gospel, is that there is only one such mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus. And it is this testimony—this protestation of God, which these teachers will expose and hold up during the apostacy. Hence they are compared to the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth—or of the holy land.

The prophet Zechariah, who, like St. John, was once in a vision, commanded to measure the temple, also speaks of two

olive trees emptying their oil into a golden candlestick with seven lamps.

A candlestick with seven lamps was a part of the furniture of the tabernacle or temple. This candlestick was placed in the holy place or outer sanctuary, and was to be kept burning during the night.

When Zechariah asked the meaning of these two olive trees, he was answered, these are the two anointed ones—or sons of oil. The oil i the symbol of divinely revealed truth or knowledge. When the knowledge is published and diffused, it becomes light. The meaning, therefore, is that the teachers whom these two prophets represent, will not only possess among themselves, divinely revealed knowledge, but that they will also hold it up to notice, and diffuse and publish it. They are said to stand by, or near to the God of the earth—like the candlestick of the temple stood near to the mercy seat of God, and by its light showed the way of access to the place of mercy. So these two prophets will serve to hold up and diffuse divinely revealed knowledge, concerning the way of approaching God, for the purpose of obtaining pardon and grace, and finding help in time of need, through the blood and merits of an only mediator—the man Christ Jesus. They prophecy in sackcloth during these twelve hundred and sixty years, and this habit of mourning and humiliation, is intended to indicate the grievous apostacy of professed Christians, and the deplorable state of the Christian Church during the period of their protestant teaching.

Verse 5. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed."

We are to understand these words in the same sense in which we understand the prediction of Isaiah, concerning the preaching of our Blessed Lord—that he should slay the wicked with the breath of his lips, or as St. Paul has it, consume them with the spirit (doctrine) of his mouth—that is, he would slay and con-

sume them intellectually, by the force of truth—that he would speak with a wisdom and spirit, which his enemies would not be able to resist. And it is in this sense that these two prophets will slay and consume their enemies by the fire or spirit of their mouth. The divinely revealed truth which they will preach and publish, will serve like fire to destroy and consume all opposing argument and discourse. The truth proceeding from their mouth, when it comes in contact with the minds of opposers, and is understood and felt by them in its power and influence, will expose their error, and deaden and destroy in them the spirit of opposition. It is impossible, that those Christians who have departed from a pure worship into idolatrous innovations, should continue their confidence in those innovations, when they are once brought to see and understand the truth concerning them, as it is exposed in holy scripture, unless their minds have become reprobate by party mania.

Verse 6. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will."

We must understand these words as we do the words of God to the prophet Jeremiah, when he gave him his prophetic commission. "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant." Jeremiah, in these words, was merely authorized to foretell or declare, the putting down and setting up, the downfall and use of these nations and kingdoms. He was to have no other agency in these events than in foretelling them. So when Ezekiel speaks of his being sent to destroy Jerusalem, he means his mission to prophecy that the city should be destroyed. When Christ gave his apostles authority to remit sins, the words mean no more than he gave them official authority to declare and pronounce sin remitted, according to the terms of the gospel. Thus these witnesses have power to declare and foretell the shutting of

heaven, that it rain not during the days (twelve hundred and sixty,) of their prophecy. As in the days of Elijah, there was a dearth of three and a-half years or twelve hundred and sixty days, so during these twelve hundred and sixty years, the Roman Christians will suffer under the effects of a moral dearth. My doctrine, says Moses, shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew—as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. The doctrine of Christ (the living water,) will become scarce in these days for the want of being published and diffused by discourse, so that it will not be until after these days, that the knowledge of the Lord will descend in copious showers, and becoming diffused by discourses or preaching, cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. These witnesses will expose and hold up to notice, the divine prediction, concerning this long moral dearth. They have also power to declare or foretell the turning of the waters into blood—that is, it will be a part of their mission, to publish that the nations in communion with the Romans, are destined to turn against them, and that they, the Romans, are to be smitten with all plagues, and these prophets are to exercise this power of declaring and foretelling these things, as often as they will—that is, as often as their zeal for the cause of Christ and revealed truth should stir them up to energy and action.

Verse 7th. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them."

The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, (more literally out of the abyss or deep,) is here merely noticed, and is left to be more fully described in a subsequent vision. The beast represents, (as we shall show hereafter,) the corporation or body of men, which we may term the Latin Catholic Corporation or Church, as distinguished from the Greek Catholic Corporation or Church. This corporation of men will enter into a war of controversy with these two witnesses, and in this war or

controversy, will succeed in overcoming them, and killing them. Whether these two witnesses represent a succession of protestant Christian teachers, or a succession of Christian communities protesting publicly against the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, the overcoming and killing them, represent the temporary suspension of protestant public teaching. If we should say, that this corporation will succeed in extinguishing the protestant public spirit in the Roman world, rendering it dead and inactive for a time, we should express the true meaning of the words of St. John.

Verse 8th. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

The great city, here means Rome, and (to conceal the name,) is elsewhere in the book, called Babylon. Babylon means Rome, in a mystical or concealed sense. Rome is here called, spiritually, or in the scriptural use and sense of the words, Sodom—on account of her loose morals. Egypt, on account of her cruel persecution and oppression of the people of God; and Jerusalem, that crucified Christ, because while professing the true religion, there is found in her the blood of saints and prophets. The city means Rome, in respect to its great polity. The street of this great city, means some law of Roman polity; a path or way, signifies in scripture, a precept, or commandment, or law. One of the most ancient laws of Rome, as quoted by Cicero, (de Leg. ii. 8,) declared that no man shall have separate gods for himself, and no man shall worship by himself, new or foreign gods, unless they have been publicly acknowledged by the laws of the state. According to the Roman Jurist, Julius Paulus, (B. v. tit. 21,) it was a leading principle of Roman law, that those who introduced new religions, or such as were unknown in their tendency and nature, by which the minds of men might be agitated, were degraded, if they belonged to the higher ranks, and if they were in a lower state, were punished with death. From Levi, we learn, that in the early ages of the

republic, the magistrates were empowered to prevent all foreign worship—to expel its ministers from the forum, the circus, and the city, to search for, and burn the religious books, and to abolish every form of sacrifice, except the national and established form. The Christian emperors, as early as Honorius, acted on this principle of Roman polity. In the reign of Honorius, Jovinian, for exposing the errors and superstitions of monasticism, was condemned by a council at Milan, and after his condemnation, the emperor issued the following ordinance. The complaint of some bishops, mentions as a grievance, that Jovinian assembles sacrilegious meetings without the walls of the most holy city. Wherefore, we ordain, that the above mentioned, be seized and whipped, together with his abettors and attendants, and confined to some place of banishment, and that the machinator himself, be immediately sent away to the island of Boa.

According to the law of Moses if a person was found killed or dead, the nearest city to the dead body was held responsible for the murder. Hence the dead bodies of these murdered prophets lie in the streets of the great city, in order to signify that the extinction of the public spirit of the protestants and reformers, will be laid to the account of some law or principle of Roman polity, and perhaps to that law or principle which as quoted above, forbids all right of private judgment in matters of religion, and visits all opposition to the established worship with penal inflictions. By whatever means the extinction of the Protestant, and reforming public spirit may be brought about, it is certain that the extinction itself will be something, which has never yet occurred during the apostacy. In the next verses we have an account of the manner in which the dead bodies of these prophets were treated, and of the joy which their death occasioned among their enemies.

Verse 9. "And they of the people and kindred, and tongues and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." They

of the gentiles, they of idolatrous or false religions in the Roman world, will now regard and treat the dead form or profession of protestantism, with utter contempt, and the Roman Christians will rejoice over the extinction of its spirit. Verse 10. And they that dwell upon the earth, (the holy land,) shall rejoice over them and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the earth, (holy land.) Protestantism as well as Mahomedanism, have much tormented, hurt, and annoyed the professors of Roman christianity, and we may well suppose that when they shall find protestantism in its public spirit to be dead, they will regard its death as a most joyful and happy event. Their rejoicing however will be of short duration.

Verse 11–12. "And after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." For three years and a half the profession of protestantism will lie without life and vigour, but at the end of this period it will become in some extraordinary manner animated by a new spirit, and assume again an erect position, and then protestantism both in spirit, and in profession, is to ascend to a high position of influence and honour in the world. They who witness for the truth as it is in Christ, against those who have apostatized into an idolatrous form of Christianity, are destined in the end to triumph over their enemies; and their profession and spirit to be held in the highest respect, and to exercise the highest kind of authority and influence on the minds of men.

An earthquake or shaking takes place cotemporaneously with the ascension of these martyrs into heaven.

Verse 13. "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were

slain of men, (or names of men,) seven thousand; and the remnants were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven." This shaking signifies a political agitation or convulsion—the fall of the tenth part of the city, portends that in this convulsion, an important part of Roman polity will be abolished; the slaying by the earthquake, of seven thousand names of men—or men of name, signifies that in this partial abolition or destruction of Roman polity, Rome will lose the active sympathy and aid of a great number of men, or worshippers of eminence and influence. These men will lose the spirit of Romans—they will cease to sympathize with the Roman party. We read that the remnant of the men of name, who were not killed by the earthquake, were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The remnant of the men of eminence and influence, who still maintained their Roman spirit and sympathy, and do not abandon the party, are induced, while under the impulse of fright, to acknowledge the justice of divine providence in the symbolical earthquake and its effects, and as thus just, render honour to God accordingly.

We perceive, that the second woe includes not only the evil inflicted by the Turkish Mahomedans, but also some evil of an internal nature and source, in some way connected with protestantism.

The spirit and profession of protestantism, both in Christian teachers and in Christian communities, have existed for many centuries. Gibbon, in speaking of the sect who were called the disciples of St. Paul, or Paulicians, and who arose in the seventh century, says, "that the invincible spirit which they had kindled, continued to live and breathe, down to modern times. In the State, in the Church, and even in the cloister, a latent succession was preserved of the disciples of St. Paul, who protested against the tyranny of Rome, embraced the Bible as the rule of faith, and purified their creed from all the visions of Gnostic theology. The struggles of Wickliff in England, and of Huss,

in Bohemia, were premature and ineffectual; but the names of Zuinglius, Luther, and Calvin, are pronounced with gratitude, as the deliverers of nations."

As early as the fifth century, in the very beginning of the apostacy, when the corruptions of Christianity had not yet subsided into habit, we read of a Spanish presbyter, Vigilantius, a man of learning, who raised a voice of protestation against the prayers addressed to departed saints, and to the extravagant honours and worship which were rendered to the martyrs.

Claudius, Bishop of Turin, who was by birth a Spaniard, has been termed the Protestant of the ninth century. He vigorously opposed the worship of images, and of the wood of the cross. "Wherefore, says he, do they not adore chaplets of thorns, because Christ was crowned with thorns; or cradles, linen, or boats, because he made use of them; or spears, because he was pierced with that weapon? or why they do not fall down to the image of an ass, because he rode on that animal. Christ Jesus did not command us to worship the cross, but to bear it—to renounce the world and ourselves." While the Mahomedans, both Saracens and Turks, from the eighth century down, have annoyed Roman Christians, both Greeks and Latins, there have not been wanting in every age, some few faithful Christians, who dissenting from the majority, have protested against their idolatrous innovations. In the eighth century, under the Greek emperors, there was a general and zealous effort made, to reform the Christian Church in the Roman world of idolatrous innovations and practices—but the effort failed, and served only to render Roman Christians more confirmed and determined in their idolatry and errors. And such has been the effect of all protestant and reforming efforts made since. The victory has been with the idolaters, and they are destined to overcome their opposers in a more remarkable manner than they have ever yet done. Like in the reign of Dioclesian, the idolatrous party will make one more desperate, and for a time, more successful effort against a protestant Chris-

tianity, than they have yet done. And this persecution will be the final one, and will end like that of Dioclesian, in the complete triumph of the persecuted, for it will be quickly followed with the reign of Christ, in judgment upon these idolatrous Christians, and in the subsequent universal prevalence of his authority and religion. This triumph of protestantism, will end the twelve hundred and sixty years, and the second woe.

"And the second woe is past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly."

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world, are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

The period included in the seventh trumpet, reaches from the beginning of the third woe, down beyond the general resurrection and general judgment, to the introduction of a new heaven and earth, from which sin and death are to be excluded. This period of the seventh trumpet consists of several parts, the first comprehends the third woe; the second, the long reign of Christianity, commonly called the millenium, as consisting of a thousand years; third, the escape of infidel power and opposition from their long millenial restraint; while the fourth division, comprehends the general resurrection and judgment, followed with the everlasting state and kingdom of glory. The kingdom or reign of the Lord and his Christ, commences with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, but it commences in judg-

ment, in the infliction of the third woe. The third woe, however, is not described, until we are prepared for the description by the communication of further information, concerning certain events, and especially concerning the beast that was to ascend out of the abyss or deep, and overcome, and slay the two witnesses.

DISCOURSE VII.

Rev. xi. 19; xii. 1—6.

"And the temple of God was opened in the heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail.

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head; and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and to his throne; and the woman fled unto the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score years."

The last verse of the eleventh chapter ought to begin the twelfth chapter. The opening of the temple or inner sanctuary in heaven; the exposing of the ark of the testament, which had its residence there, and the lightings, and voices, and thunderings, and earthquake, and great hail, intimate that the revelation or vision about to be communicated, was of an extraordinary character; exposing to notice judgments of God unsearchable, and ways of God past finding out. Similar circumstances of a terrific nature occurred on the earth and in the elements at the revelation and giving of the law at Mount Sinai. Heaven, or

the high-place on which the temple is situated, represents the government or place of power and authority—in the Roman world the throne of God in the temple represents the place of supreme sovereign authority. They who dwell in heaven, or have a place there, represent those who have office or authority in the government; while those who dwell on the earth represent those without office and authority—the governed as distinguished from the governing. The exposure of the ark seems intended to intimate an exposure of the judgments and ways of Divine providence in matters of a sacred or religious nature. Accordingly in the new scene which opens to the vision of the apostle, we have first presented to us a symbolic representation of the history of Christianity, and Paganism particularly, in their corporate capacities, and in their conflict with each other, from the beginning of the Christian corporation at Jerusalem, under the government and teaching of the twelve apostles down to its obscure and desolate condition during the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the apostacy. This history of the conflict between Christianity and Paganism, in their corporate capacities, is given us under signs or symbols, which are peculiarly striking when they are rightly understood.

And there appeared a great wonder (sign, symbol) in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

The woman is the symbol of Jerusalem or the Christian Church, (catholic,) considered as a body corporate and politic. Christianity, in its church or corporate character, began in the city of Jerusalem.

This corporation was at first under the chief government and teaching of the twelve apostles, and this is the reason why the woman has on her head a crown of twelve stars.

The sun with which she is clothed, is the revelation of Christ, and the moon which is under her feet, is the revelation of Moses —the one being a brighter revelation than the other, as the sun

is brighter than the moon; and the one borrowing its light from the other, as the moon borroweth its light from the sun.

How comparatively obscure would be the meaning of Jewish sacrifices without the light of Christianity to expose that meaning. Before the Christian revelation, the Church had only the light of the moon—the sun had not yet risen but was below the horizon. The Church then knew that the light which she possessed was borrowed or reflected light, yet she was expecting the time when the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world, would appear above the horizon. The Christian revelation is not only a brighter light than the revelation of Moses, but it is the original light, of which the latter is but the moonlight reflection. Now when the sun, the original light, appeared above the horizon, the moon became of little use in giving light, and she lost her importance and her glory by reason of the superior glory of the sun. As soon as the sun, the light of the gospel, appears above the horizon, the moon, the light of Moses, sinks into inferiority. As soon as the Church is clothed with the sun, the moon assumes a position beneath her feet. Thus the woman with a crown of twelve stars on her head, with the sun about her person and the moon under her feet, is beautifully symbolic of the Christian (catholic) Church, under the original oversight of the twelve apostles, enveloped in the glorious light of the gospel revelation, and placed above the necessity of the moonlight of Jewish rites and sacrifices. The Church makes her appearance in heaven, or the place of power in the government, where, (verse 2,) being with child, she cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. Here the Christian Church is represented as a mother bearing children. It is also represented by the prophet Isaiah, (chap. liv. 1, 3,) Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing thou that didst not travail with child. Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles. (Isaiah, lvi. 7, 8;) Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a

man child. As soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children. Individual members are the seed or children of this corporation, while Christ is the husband. The pains of travail under which the woman suffered, represent the painful condition of the Cristian Church while she was about to add a Roman emperor to the number of her children.

In the next verse we have another wonder, or symbol, which makes its appearance in heaven, in the celestial temple. This was a great red (fiery colored) dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head, and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth. The dragon represents the established religion as a corporation—the pagan body or party whose religion was a constituent part of the State. The seven heads represent the seven different forms of government by which this body, in the course of its history, was successively ruled. These heads are more particularly spoken of in the seventeenth chapter. It will merely here be necessary to anticipate that the last form of the pagan government was that new autocrat imperial form which was instituted by Dioclesian, and perfected by Constantine and his successors. The ten horns, as we learn in the seventeenth chapter, represent the ten cotemporaneous States, or powers, which were to spring up in this body of men.

The red or fiery color of the dragon, is emblematic of a vindictive and sanguinary character. The tail of the dragon represents the fanatical teachers and priests of the pagan party; while the third part of the stars of heaven represent Christian teachers as constituting an important portion of eminent teachers in the Roman world.

These stars are drawn along at the tail of the dragon and dashed about on the ground, in order to represent the degrading and violent treatment which many Christian bishops and teachers received at the hands of the fanatical portion of the pagan party under the pagan emperors.

Whenever the pagan party was aroused by its fanatical

priests and advocates to enmity and opposition to Christianity, the bishops and eminent Christian teachers were generally the principal objects against whom pagan enmity and opposition were directed.

It was supposed by the pagan opposers and persecutors, that if they could remove the teachers and pastors, and especially the bishops, from their flocks, they would have less difficulty in crushing the Christian religion. The bishops and teachers were the especial objects of hatred and persecution, because they were constantly inflaming the zeal of their flocks for the Christian faith.

The fourth and fifth verses. And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, (a son, a man,) who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up to God and to his throne. As the man of sin—the one above law, who, according to the apostle, was to have his seat or throne in the temple or Church of God, and exalt himself above all human dignity and authority, evidently signifies a ruler or succession of rulers. We may attach a similar signification to the son of man, or man child, whom the woman was about to bring forth, especially as it is declared of him, that he was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. The son, a man, must therefore represent a Christian ruler or emperor, governing the pagan communities with an iron rule.

This man child was born into the Roman world when Constantine first succeeding to a joint participation in the imperial office and dignity, professed himself the protector and advocate of Christianity; and the man child was caught up to God and his throne when the whole of the imperial office came into the possession of Constantine and his successors. According to St. Paul, there is no power but of God—the powers that be, are ordained of God. In this sense the imperial throne was the throne of God. The pagan party is represented as prepared and

on the alert to crush and destroy imperial Christianity at its birth. Constantine, escaping from the power of the pagan emperors and persecutors, succeeded to the imperial office in the western part of the empire, and it was through much opposition from the pagan party and emperors, that he finally succeeded to the undivided imperial office.

As soon, however, as the imperial throne came to be occupied by a professed protector and advocate of the Christian Church, then begins the period of the woman's flight from heaven into the wilderness, into a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days. This language signifies, that after the establishment of an advocate and protector on the imperial throne, the Christian Church, as a corporation, obedient to the apostolic teaching and authority, and diffusing the light of the gospel, would begin to retire from the immediate notice of those in power, and be driven into an obscure and forlorn condition; that she would exist in this condition during a period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years; that during this period she would be distinguished neither for number nor consideration.

While, however, the Church (the Christian body politic) is in this transition state and period, from a high to an obscure position in the Roman world, there is carried on a contest among those in power. In this contest, the friends of Christianity endeavour to cast the pagan party and its advocates out of their place of authority.

Verses six to nine. And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out and his angels were cast out with him.

After the imperial office had been gained to the side of Chris-

tianity, the party in the government on the side of Christianity began a contest with the pagan party and its advocates to drive them from power. And this contest continued for more than half of a century. The woman leaves heaven, or the high place on which the temple stands before the war commenced there, and at the end of the war she is found upon the earth.

The war is not between the woman and the dragon, but between Michael and the dragon, each supported by their respective angels. Christianity as a church or corporation, depended to a certain extent upon the civil or secular government for protection. She bears not the sword, but looks to the state or secular authority to protect her in her corporate rights. The use of the sword or of weapons of war is not more unsuitable to the gentle nature of woman, than it is to that of the Christian church. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual.

Concerning Michael, we learn from the prophet Daniel, that he stands for the children of God's people or church, and uses his power with secular kings and governments, in order to protect and maintain their cause.

We may therefore make Michael here, to represent, not the Christian church, but the imperial power taking the side of Christianity. The imperial power and those who side with it, succeed in overcoming the pagan party and its advocates and expelling them so effectually from the government, that their place therein was not found any more, and the pagan corporation and religion ceased to be a constituent part of the state, and lost the aid and patronage of the secular power.

This great and ancient corporation had so much calumniated and opposed the true religion, that it is called the devil and Satan, that is, the calumniator or liar and the opposer or enemy. It had been also, wonderfully successful in deluding the great mass of the people of the empire, working after this manner of Satan, with falsehood and fictitious privileges, with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, and with all the deception

of dishonesty. But it was now degraded from power and place into a state of subjection and submission.

"It is very remarkable, that Constantine and the Christians "of his time describe his victory over the Pagan party, under "the same image that we find here in St. John, as if they had "understood that this prophecy had received its accomplish-"ment in him."

"Constantine himself, in his epistle to Eusebius and other "bishops, concerning the re-edifying and repairing of churches, "saith that liberty being now restored and the dragon being "removed from the administration of public affairs by the pro-"vidence of the great God, and by my ministry, I esteem the "great power of God to have been made manifest even to all." Moreover, a picture of Constantine was set up over the palace gate with the cross over his head, and under his feet the great enemy of mankind who persecuted the church by means of impious tyrants in the form of a dragon, transfixed with a dart through the midst of his body, and falling headlong into the midst of the sea; in allusion as it is said, expressly to the divine oracles in the books of the prophets where that evil spirit is called the dragon and the crooked serpent. (Bishop Newton, Dis. 25.) The fall of paganism from place and power in the Roman government, was not however, completed, until the reign of Theodosius the great, at the close of the fourth century. "The titles, the ensigns, the prerogatives of sovereign power," says Gibbon, "which had been instituted by Numa and assumed by Augustus, were accepted without hesitation by seven Christian emperors, who were invested with a more absolute authority over the religion which they had deserted, than over that which they had professed." But when Gratian, (A. D., 375,) ascended the throne, more scrupulous or more enlightened, he sternly rejected those profane symbols; applied to the service of the state or of the church, the revenues of the priests and of the vestals, abolished their honours and immunities, and dis-

solved the ancient fabric of Roman superstition which was supported by the opinions and habits of eleven hundred years. Paganism was still the constitutional religion of the senate of Rome. And this emperor yet spared the statutes of the gods, which were exposed to the public veneration; four hundred and twenty-four temples or chapels, still remained to satisfy the devotion of the people, and in every quarter of Rome the delicacy of Christians was offended by the fumes of idolatrous sacrifice. Before the entire abolition of the Pagan worship in the city of Rome, Symachus, the pagan pontiff and augur, addressed a defence of paganism to the emperor, in which he introduces the celestial genius that presided over the fates of Rome, as petitioning the emperors in the following language. "Most "excellent princes, fathers of your country, pity and respect "my age which has hither flowed in an uninterrupted course of "piety. Since I do not repent, permit me to continue in the "practice of my ancient rites. Since I am born free, allow me "to enjoy my domestic institutions. This religion has reduced "the world under my laws. These rites have repelled Hannibal "from the gates of the city and the Gauls from the capitol. "Were my gray hairs reserved for such intolerable disgrace? "I am ignorant of the new system which I am required to adopt, "but I am well assured that the correction of old age, is always "an ungrateful and ignominious task." The eloquence of the pontiff and of the celestial genius, was however, of no avail. "In the reign of Theodosius, that emperor, in a full meeting of "the senate of Rome, proposed, according to the forms of the "republic, the important question, whether the worship of Ju- "piter or that of Christ, should be the religion of the Romans. "On a regular division of the senate, Jupiter was condemned "and degraded by the senate, of a very large majority. . . . . "They yielded to the authority of the emperor, to the fashion "of the times, and to the entreaties of their wives and children, "who were instigated and governed by the clergy of Rome and "the works of the east. . . . . And the luminaries of the

"world, the venerable assembly of Catos, (such are the high-
"flown expressions of Prudentius,) were impatient to strip them-
"selves of their pontifical garments; to *cast the skin of the old*
"*serpent*, to assume the snowy robes of baptismal innocence,
"and to humble the pride of the consular fasces before the
"tombs of the martyrs. . . . . The decrees of the senate
"which proscribed the worship of idols, were ratified by the
"general consent of the Romans. Rome submitted to the yoke
"of the gospel, and the vanquished provinces had not yet lost
"their reverence for the name and authority of Rome." (Gibbon.)

The proscription of the pagan religion by the senate of Rome, may be regarded as the consummation of its fall from place and power in the government. Being now driven from its last stronghold of influence and authority, it retired and languished in the country and small villages, and hence received the name of paganism—(the rustic or village religion.)

Paganism, with the whole power and wealth and patronage of the Roman empire to sustain it, did for a period of three hundred years, oppose and persecute Christianity, which, during that period, was entirely dependant upon its own resources, without the protection, much less the patronage of government, yea, often obliged to contend against its active opposition; yet, at the end of these three hundred years, it was still found in corporate life and vigor, while its mortal enemy vanquished, was soon to be degraded from all place in the government and to be proscribed as a part of the state religion.

With the fall of the pagan party from power, the friends of Christianity in the government, express sanguine hopes of the immediate prevalence of their religion in great power and influence.

10th verse. "And I heard a loud voice, saying in heaven: Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

The pagan party, which had been incessantly accusing us to the supreme sovereign power, as bringing by our neglect of the established religion, the wrath of heaven upon the government and the empire, is now deprived of all power to injure us. And what were the means by which Christianity, (so long sustaining itself against the hostile power of this formidable party,) eventually vanquished her enemy?

Verse 11. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

The advocates of the Christian faith gained the victory by holding up the blood of Christ shed upon the cross, as the meaning and end of all sacrifices, by diligently publishing the doctrine and testimony of Christ, and by choosing to suffer and die, rather than abandon their Christian profession.

"I have seen the sun, (says Bishop Taylor,) with a little ray of distant light, challenge all the powers of darkness, and without violence or noise climbing up, hath made night so to retire, that its memory was lost in the joys and sprightfulness of morning, and Christianity, without violence or armies, without strength or human eloquence, without challenging or privileges or fighting against tyranny, without alteration of government and scandal of princes, with its humility and meekness, with toleration and patience, with obedience and charity, with praying and dying, did insensibly turn the world into Christian and persecution into victory. When the dragon was cast down from heaven and the temple unto the earth, the inhabitants of heaven were summoned to rejoice, while the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea, are forewarned of evil from the rage of the dragon.

Verse 12. "Rejoice ye heavens and ye that dwell in them—woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea, for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath because he knoweth he hath but a short time."

Paganism defeated and expelled from government and in-

flamed with great rage against Christianity was now forced to take up its abode among the inhabiters of the earth and the sea —that portion of the population who have no part in the government. And thus the contest and opposition prosecuted in the government, were now to be prosecuted by the pagan party among the people and prosecuted with great animosity and vindictiveness. After the expulsion of the pagan party from power, the pagans were sensible that with the government against them, their time was short; that they must soon sink into insignificance, and a sense of this fact much exasperated the party and provoked its advocates to express themselves towards Christianity with the greatest bitterness and acrimony, and to arouse the prejudices and passions of the multitude against the new religion, so that sometimes, in remote provinces, the pagans defended their ancient superstitions by the force of arms, and massacred the Christians, who were not always sufficiently attentive either to the rules of prudence or the dictates of humanity.

"The political and philosophical remains of Eunapius Zosi-
"mus and the fanatical teachers of the schools of Plato, betray
"the most furious animosity, and contain the sharpest invectives
"against the sentiments and conduct of their victorious adver-
"saries. If these audacious libels were publicly known, we
"must applaud the good sense of the Christian princes, who
"viewed, with a smile of contempt, the last struggles of super-
"stition and despair." (Gibbon.)

DISCOURSE VIII.

REVELATIONS xii. 13–17.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

When the dragon is cast out of his place in heaven unto the earth, he finds the woman also on the earth and commences to persecute her or pursue after her.

But the woman now furnished with two wings of a great eagle, is enabled to increase her speed to her place of security, beyond the face or presence of the serpent. Among the attributes of royalty which the Tuscans sent to the Romans in the days of the republic, was a sceptre with an eagle of ivory, and from that time, the eagle became one of the principal emblems of the republic, and after the subversion of the republic, it was still retained by the Roman emperors. In the army, the eagle was carried at the head of every legion or regiment, while the dragon was carried at the head of every cohort or company.

The expulsion of the pagan party from their place in the government, was consummated in the reign of Theodosius the great, and at the same time were consummated the alliance of the church with the state and the permanent division of the state, into the Greek or Eastern, and the Latin or Western empires. On his death-bed in the year 395, Theodosius divided

the empire between his two sons Arcadeus and Honorius, and the division proved to be permanent. These two parts of the empire, were however, not so divided but that a kind of union was preserved between them, and one important bond of this union was the Christian church, (Catholic.) The wings of the fireat eagle represent these two separate powers or states, and as joined to the woman they represent these two powers or states in alliance with the Christian church, aiding and protecting her.

Let it be noticed that the woman after she had brought forth a son—a man—an emperor, descended from heaven or the temple, down to the earth on her way to the wilderness, so when the dragon finds himself upon the earth, he finds the woman there also. The woman did not remain in heaven where she was first seen and take there the place of the dragon after his expulsion, but she comes down to the earth, and is there found invested with two wings of a great eagle. This was intended to signify, that the Christian church, though allied with and aided by the state, was nevertheless in subjection to it, and did not take that place and share in its government, from which the pagan party had been expelled; that the church, notwithstanding the alliance and aid of the state, had her place among the governed—the people—the subjects of the empire.

The pagan system was merely an engine of state. Its entire "regulation, even to the performance of its most sacred rites "and offices, was entrusted to the control and exercise of the "civil magistrate. The power which directed it as well as the "power which its ministers possessed to enforce their decrees, "were not distinguished from that with which they were invested "for any other purpose." Thus paganism was identified with the state, whereas the Christian Church from its origin was a corporation distinct from the state, and was intended to be so by its founder. My kingdom is not of this world is the language of Christ to the Roman governor. His kingdom is not a secular kingdom. Unlike secular kingdoms it was not to depend

for its authority and influence upon physical or military force, but upon the force of truth. He that is of the truth heareth my voice. The subjects of Christ's kingdom are those who have an ear and a heart for the truth.

But though the Church was intended to be a corporate body distinct from the state, and to have no share or place in the government, yet she needs the power and authority of the state to protect her in her corporate rights, and this legal protection she eventually received from the Roman government, and from being a persecuted or merely tolerated she became an authorized corporation.

And if the favour as well as protection conferred upon the Church by the state, had the effect to keep her beyond the persecuting power and attacks of the pagan party, it must be noticed that they had this effect by increasing her speed into the wilderness — into desolation and obscurity. As soon as the Church could number among her members an imperial ruler, she began to flee or run to the wilderness, and when she received not merely the protection but the close alliance of the state, the power of flying is added to that of running, and now she is enabled to increase her speed to her destined forlorn state. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness—into her place where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent. And what are we to understand by this running and then flying of the woman into the wilderness from the face of the serpent.

The Israelites fled from Egypt into the wilderness, and hence they are called by the martyr Stephen, the Church which was in the wilderness. In the wilderness the Israelites were sustained by miraculous food during a period of forty years. It might be said of the Church of Israel under Moses, that she fled from the dragon, the symbol of Egyptian power into the wilderness—into her place which God had prepared for her, and

where she was fed and nourished during this period in an extraordinary manner.

And if St. John says that she was converted with two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, a similar expression is used by Moses to describe the manner in which the Israelites made their way into the same place.

After they had escaped into the wilderness and were encamped about Mount Sinai, God spake unto them and said, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself, (brought you here in the wilderness unto my presence, to hear my voice and receive commandments.")

If the Church of Israel passed the Red Sea, and on her way to the wilderness from the face of her enemies, so the Christian Church in fleeing from the face of her enemy into the wilderness escaped a flood of water which threatened to overwhelm her.

We read, that there was in the days of Elijah the prophet, a drought and famine in the land of Israel, which lasted three years and six months, or twelve hundred and sixty days.

During this period the prophet was fed and nourished in an extraordinary manner in some retired places which concealed him from the knowledge and presence of his idolatrous enemies. These places were appointed and prepared of God for the residence of the prophets. The period of Elijah's concealment and preservation corresponds with the three and a half years of the woman's concealment and preservation in the wilderness in her appointed place. In other respects, however, this symbolic representation of St. John runs more in parallel with the history of the Church of Israel in her flight from Egypt into the wilderness, and her preservation and nourishment there in an imperfect state of polity. The word wilderness when applied to the Christian Church evidently contains three important ideas, an imperfectly administered polity, concealment and security. It is no doubt intended to signify that during the period specified, those Christians who adhered to a pure faith and worship, would

not, as a Catholic body politic, exist in a perfect state of order and government, or attract much notice, but would exist in an impaired and obscure state, and that in this state would consist their security. Accordingly for many hundred years past, Christians of a pure faith and pure morals who have protested against the idolatry and errors of the majority, have in their Catholic corporate character been deficient in polity and government, and obtained but little consideration in the Roman world —they have commanded more notice and been more effective in their protestant teaching character, than that of a Catholic corporation in a proper state of order and discipline. Cities are said in Scripture to be made a wilderness when they have been reduced into a dilapidated and depopulated condition. And such is the state of the Christian city or body politic, her people are small in numbers, and wanting in unity and order.

Up to the time of Constantine, Christians of a pure faith and worship had preserved themselves a united and well ordered body of men, and had attained unto great notice and influence in the Roman world, but after the time of Constantine they gradually became in minority or remnants, and then gradually sunk as a body politic, into an impaired and obscure condition.

And such is their present condition in Roman Catholic countries. There has existed in Roman Catholic "Christendom for "ages past a body of men who, like the remnant of the seven "thousand of Israel that had not bowed the knee to the image "of Baal, have not been much noticed or regarded except by "the searcher of hearts, but nevertheless have been more espe- "cially entitled to the name of the true Church, and amidst the "corruptions, the discouragements, and the changes of a world "with which they had but little in common, and which was not "worthy of them, pursued their pure course in privacy." Among these men the testimony of Jesus—the pure Word of God, has been taught and believed, and thus nourished by the Word of God they have been preserved in their imperfect and obscure

corporate condition—the providence of God furnishing them with the means of nourishment and preservation.

We are informed that the woman was to dwell and be nourished in the wilderness during a determined period, but we are not informed how long the woman was to be occupied in her passage or transition into the wilderness. Her transition was gradual, it began soon after the time of Constantine, and ended about the eighth century, occupying a period of four or five centuries.

The persecutions with which the Christian Church before the time of Constantine was so personally assailed, had the effect of deterring insincere and worldly minded men from assuming the Christian profession or ministry in any great number.

When, however, the protection and favour of Constantine began to make the Christian profession fashionable and popular, and to increase the honours and authority and emoluments of its ministers, persons of a different character began to occupy the profession and ministry. The increased rank and power and wealth with which the Roman emperors invested the clergy, began to attract into the clerical office ambitious and unscrupulous men, who sought power and station more than the true interest and welfare of the Church. And such men would use a dexterity and a policy to gain their objects, from which the sincere and the modest would shrink. Without a concealed policy, and a busy and bold ambition, men do not get along very well in the scuffle after the honours and employments of public life. Those of sincere intentions and retiring habits are unable in such a scuffle to compete with the unscrupulous and ambitious.

Accordingly when the policy of the Roman emperors in protecting and favouring the Church, brought forth the bold and the aspiring into prominence—the ingenuous and the modest began to retire from the busy strife, and were content to labour in their vocation without seeking public notice or the honours and emoluments of office and rank.

Constantine, says Gibbon, (Chap. 20,) by the edicts of tolera-

tion, removed the temporal disadvantages which had hitherto retarded the progress of Christianity; and the active and numerous ministers received a free permission or liberal encouragement to recommend the salutary truths of revelation by every argument which could affect the reason or piety of mankind. The exact balance of the two religions continued but a moment; and the piercing eye of ambition and avarice soon discovered that the profession of Christianity might contribute to the interests of the present as well as of a future life.

The hopes of wealth and honours, the example of an emperor, his exhortations, his irresistible smiles, diffused conviction among the venal and obsequious crowds which usually fill the apartments of a palace. The cities which signalized a forward zeal by the voluntary destruction of their temples, were distinguished by municipal privileges, and regarded with popular donatives; and the new capitol of the East gloried in the singular advantage that Constantinople was never profaned by the worship of idols.

As the lower ranks of society are governed by imitation, the conversion of those who possessed any eminence of birth, of power or of riches, were soon followed by dependent multitudes.

The vices and faults of the clergy of the fourth century, says Mosheem, especially of those who officiated in large and opulent cities, were augmented in proportion to the increase of their wealth, honours, and advantages derived from the emperors, and various other sources; and that this increase was very great after the times of Constantine is acknowledged by all. The bishops had shameful quarrels among themselves respecting the boundaries of their seas and the extent of their jurisdiction; and while they trampled on the rights of the people and of the inferior clergy, they vied with the civil governors of provinces in luxury, arrogance and voluptuousness. The presbyters in many places arrogated to themselves a dignity and authority equal to bishops. Of the pride and effeminacy of the deacons,

we often meet with various complaints. . . . . The bishop of Rome surpassed all his brethren in the amplitude and splendor of the church over which he presided, in the magnitude of his revenues and possessions, in the number of his assistants or ministers of various descriptions, in the weight of his influence with the people at large, and in the sumptuousness and magnificence of his style of living. These indications of power and worldly greatness were so fascinating to Christians even in this age, that often most obstinate and bloody contests took place at Rome when a new pontiff was to be created by the suffrages of the priests and people."

The Christian Church during the two years of the reign of Julian, was an object of partial persecution by the imperial court, and during this time the disputes and animosities which had disturbed the Church in the reigns of Constantine and his sons were suspended. As soon, however, as a new emperor ascended the throne and proclaimed himself a Christian, and restored Christianity to the protection and favour of the State, then these disputes and animosities revived with increased virulence.

Gibbon has given the following picture of the circumstances attending this change of person in the imperial office. "But they were still ignorant what creed or what synod he would choose for the standard of orthodoxy; and the peace of the Church immediately revived those eager disputes which had been suspended during the period of persecution. The episcopal leaders of the contending sects, convinced from experience, how much their fate would depend on the earliest impressions that were made on the mind of an untutored soldier, hastened to the court of Edessa or Antioch. The high ways of the east were crowded with Homousean and Arian, and Semi-Arian, and Eunomian bishops, who outstripped each other in the holy race; the apartments of the palace resounded with their clamours, and the ears of the prince were assaulted and perhaps astonished by the singular mixture of metaphysical argument and passionate

invective." We may well suppose that Christians possessed of those amiable dispositions inculcated by our Blessed Lord in the first part of the fifth chapter of Matthew, as characteristic of his true subjects and disciples, would find nothing congenial to their feelings in these public unbecoming scenes of passion and strife, and that their feelings and language would be those of the prophet. Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men: that I might leave my people and go from them. . . . Take ye heed every one of his neighbour: and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. We may well suppose that such circumstances would tend to drive those of a true Christian character and spirit into retirement, and eventually to reduce them as a body corporate and politic into desolation and obscurity, and render them insignificant and contemptible in the opinion of the ambitious and the worldly.

The favour and protection conferred upon the Church by Constantine and other emperors, were confirmed and increased by Theodosius the Great, and this confirmation and increase of State favour and protection gave wings to the flight of the woman into the wilderness, into her state of desolation and obscurity.

An ecclesiastical historian (Waddington) remarks on the long and violent controversy which ended in the establishment of image worship as the law of Roman Christendom, (the true Church Catholic had then reached the wilderness,) "that he is "persuaded that the body of the clergy contained many pious "and rational individuals who were shocked at the degradation "of Christianity and humanity, and who watched with an "anxious eye the endeavours which were made to remove it. "But such characters which are among the best and the sacred "profession, are seldom busy or ambitious. And the anxiety "of those excellent men may have been often confined to their "own bosoms, or at least to the narrow limits of their diocese." The defective order and the obscure condition of Christianity as a Catholic body corporate and politic during the predicted 1260

years, is the reason why during this period she has so little place or consideration in history, and why it is so difficult to establish her continuous succession during this period by historical proofs. The very fact however of this want of historical notice and proof, corresponds with this symbolical representation of the woman secreted and nourished in the wilderness, out of the way and noise of the busy world, out of the notice and observation of history.

If however the alliance and favour of the state served to drive the faithful as a body into a wilderness state, they served also another incidental important purpose, that of enabling the Church to elude an imminent danger which overtook her during the period of her transition into a wilderness state. When the dragon finds that the woman by reason of her ways can keep herself beyond his hostile pursuit, he casts out of his mouth (verse 15,) water as a flood that he might cause her to be carried away of a flood. The flood or current of waters by which the dragon aimed, and hoped to sweep away the woman from off the face of the Roman earth, and overwhelm her in destruction, is intended to represent that inundation of pagan Barbarians, or foreigners which had set in upon the Roman population.

These pagan barbarians after desolating the empire, assumed a more settled character.

They are at first represented as winds restless and desolating, venting themselves in fire and hail, and blood, but they are now represented as overflowing water. In their changed and more settled condition, they threatened to overpower the Roman population in their laws and institutions, and along with Roman laws and institutions, the Christian Church and religion. This ultimate consequence constituted at that time, the aim and hope of the pagan party among the Romans, but they were disappointed.

Among the calamitous events which befel the Church, after the death of Theodosuis the great, Mosheim mentions the invasions of the pagan nations. During the fifth century, (says

he,) the Goths, Hemli, Franks, Huns and Vandals, with other fierce and warlike nations, for the most part strangers to christianity, invaded the Roman empire, and rent it asunder in the most deplorable manner. Amidst these calamities the Christians were grievous, (we may venture to say principal) sufferers. It is true that the savage nations were much more intent upon the acquisitions of wealth and dominion, than upon the propagation or support of the pagan superstitions, nor did their cruelty and opposition to the Christians, arise from any religious principle, or from an enthusiastic desire to ruin the cause of christianity; it was merely by the instigation of the pagans who remained yet in the empire, that they were excited to treat with such severity and violence the followers of Christ. The painful consideration of their abrogated rights, and the hopes of recovering their former liberty and privileges, by means of their new masters, induced the worshippers of the Gods, to seize with avidity every opportunity of inspiring them with the most bitter aversion to the christians. Their endeavours however were without the desired effect, and their expectations were entirely disappointed. The greatest part of these barbarians embraced christianity, though it be also true that in the beginning of their usurpations, the professors of that religion suffered heavily under the rigor of their government.

The woman was helped by the earth, which (16th verse) opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood.

The Roman population in their laws and civilization, were for a while overwhelmed—overpowered by the barbarians, in the course of time gained the upperhand, and those conquered by the sword of the barbarians, became in their turn conquerors by their laws and institutions. To use the language of Bishop Newton; nothing was more likely to produce the ruin and utter subversion of the christian Church, than the irruptions of so many barbarous heathen nations. But the event proved contrary to human appearance and expectation; the earth swallowed up the flood; the barbarians were rather

swallowed up by the Romans, than the Romans by the barbarians, the heathen conquerors instead of imposing their own, submitted to the religion of the conquered christians, and they not only embraced the religion, but affected even the laws, the manners, the customs, the language and the very name of Romans, so that the victors were in a manner absorbed, and lost among the vanquishers. But if the woman in escaping the flood, was helped from below by the earth, so was she also helped from above by her wings, if she was helped by the people, so was she also helped by her alliance with the government, by the power and consideration, which that alliance had conferred upon her teachers and rulers.

The alliance and favour of the state had served to increase the rank and importance of her rulers and teachers, and to elevate them to the first station among the subjects of the empire, and it was this elevation to high rank and station, that gave them consideration and influence among the pagan invaders, and brought them to adopt Roman civilization and religion. The consideration and influence which the ministers and teachers of the Church, possessed in the minds of the pagan barbarians, and which they had acquired by the help of the state, served to save the Church from being overwhelmed by the current of pagan power, and disorder which had set in upon the Roman population; such might have been its fate, (Waddington Chap. 18,) had it not been rescued by an established body of ministers, or had that body been less zealous or influential. Among the Romans the common people were for the most part recent, and not always very serious converts from polytheism; the higher classes were neither numerous nor powerful, nor had any interest in the support of christianity; the clergy alone composed the vital efficient portion of the aristocracy. Among the barbarians the rudest soldier brought with him a superstitious reverence for the office and person of a religious minister, which prepared him for adhesion to the religion itself, especially where the ministers were honoured, and the ceremonies splendid; and

the illiterate prince readily gave attention to the counsels of the bishops who were the most learned, and the most respected among his subjects. Thence resulted the gradual conversion of the invaders by the agency of the visible Church. Without these means had christianity there existed as a mere individual belief, or even under a less vigorous form of human government, the religious society would have possessed neither the energy nor discipline necessary for resistance, to the deluge which endangered it."

Had the Church, as under the pagan emperors, been at this time an illegal, persecuted, despised society among the Romans? Had she not been acknowledged and protected, and favoured by state as a distinct corporation. Had she not possessed the additional vigor and influence, which the state had thus imparted to her rulers and teachers, she must have been overtaken and overwhelmed by barbarian and pagan violence. Guizot (in his 6th Lecture on civilization,) thus explains the escape of the Church from this threatened destruction at the hands of the pagan barbarians, who had settled among the Roman population after conquering them.

Just at the time the empire fell, the Church believed that she had attained the summit of her hopes; after a long struggle she had completely vanquished paganism. Gratian the last emperor who assumed the pagan dignity of sovereign pontiff, died at the close of the fourth century. The Church believed herself equally victorious in her struggle against heretics, particularly against Arianism, the principal heresy of the time. Theodosius at the end of the fourth century put them down by imperial edicts; and had the double merit of subduing the Arian heresy, and abolishing the worship of idols throughout the Roman world. The Church then was in the possession of the government, and had obtained the victory over her two greatest enemies. It was at this moment that the Roman empire failed her, and she stood in the presence of new pagans, of new heretics in the

presence of barbarians, of Goths, of Vandals, of Burgundians and Franks,—the fall was immense.

(Lecture 2d, on general civilization.) Had it not been a Church, it is hard to say what would have been its fate in the general convulsion which attended the overthrow of the Roman empire. At this time there existed none of those means by which an abstract truth now makes way, gains an authority over mankind, governs their actions, and directs their movements. Nothing of this kind existed in the fourth century, nothing which could give to simple ideas, to personal opinions so much weight and power.

Hence, I think it may be assumed, that only a society firmly established under a powerful government and rules of discipline, could hope to bear up amid such disaster—could hope to weather so violent a storm. I think, then, humanly speaking, that it was the Christian Church with its institutions, its magistrates, its authority, that saved Christianity, that struggling against the barbarians overcame them. Thus, the external help, with which the Church had been invested by the state, added to her ability to keep above and beyond the calamity with which the Roman population was for a while overwhelmed.

Verse 17. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went (departed) to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The pagan invaders, who, in the fifth century, like fierce winds, devastated the empire in the course of the sixth and seventh centuries, became a more settled and orderly population, and conforming to Roman laws and institutions, were absorbed among the Roman population. And now after the conversion of the pagan barbarians to the Roman civilization and religion, and the subsequent reduction of the true Church, in its catholic corporate character, into an object of little consideration in the Roman world, the infidel party cease to notice Christians of a pure faith and worship, in their Church or corporate character,

but oppose and contend with them in their individual and isolated character.

How the dragon, by means of another beast, makes war upon this remnant, during the residence of the woman in the wilderness beyond his notice, we shall learn in the next chapter.

DISCOURSE IX.

Rev. xiii. 1–10.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is patience and the faith of the saints."

It may not be useless to call to our attention, the contents of the preceding chapter.

The woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head, is the Christian Church, as a catholic body, corporate and politic, possessed of the glorious light of the Christian religion, placed above the moonlight of the crusaic revelation, and being originally, under

the teaching and rule of the twelve apostles. The travail and distress of the woman, represent the deplorable condition of this corporation of men, under the persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius, when she was on the eve of adding an emperor to the number of her children.

The dragon with the seven heads crowned, and the ten horns yet uncrowned, is the pagan corporation or body of men. This corporation in the course of its history, passed through seven different forms of government, represented by seven different heads.

The ten horns uncrowned, represent ten kingdoms, ten powers or states, who were not to become such in the pagan, but in a subsequent corporation.

The birth of a son, a man, and his exaltation to the throne of God, represent the imperial office and authority, as coming first into the partial, and afterwards into the full possession of sovereigns, the protectors of the Christian Church. The first emperor professedly Christian, who protected and favoured the Christian Church, was Constantine. After his ascension to the height of power, to the undivided imperial office and authority, began the war in heaven; Michael and his angels on the one side, and the dragon and his angels on the other side. This war in heaven, signifies the contest carried on in the government, between the advocates of Christianity and its adversaries and opposers. In this contest, the advocates of Christianity, with the emperor at their head, endeavoured to expel the pagan corporation and party from all power and place in the government, and they were eventually successful. And the dragon and his angels were cast out, and their place was found no more in heaven. The expulsion was consummated in the reign of Theodosius the great, at the close of the fourth century, and at the same time were perfected the alliance between the government and the Church, and the division of the empire into two powers or states, with the Christian Church as an important bond of union between them. Then was the woman in full pos-

session of the two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness. In the reign of Constantine she began to fly—to run for the wilderness, and in the reign of Theodosius she receives wings, which enable her to increase her speed thither.

The rest from persecution in the time of Constantine, and the honors and revenues which he and his successors conferred upon the Christian Church and its ministers, served to render the Christian profession and ministry popular and fashionable, and to introduce among them many unworthy and ambitious persons, who eventually secured the ascendancy in power and influence.

The introduction of such persons into the Church, naturally drove the more sincere and modest from the notice of the public, until eventually Christian ministers and professors of this character became a small minority, driven in their corporate capacity into a wilderness or desolate state—a state defective in organization and order, and without public consideration and influence; and it was the want of such public consideration and influence in which consisted the security and preservation of this body of men in the Roman community. But while the alliance and favour of the State thus served to drive the faithful minority into a desolate corporate state, they also served the purpose of saving the Church in the time of its transition into dissolution, and security from being lost among the barbarian heathens and idolaters, who settled among the Roman population. The honours and revenues which had been conferred upon the Church and its ministers by the Roman government, served to give to these ministers a consequence and influence in the minds of the barbarians, which aided greatly in their civilization and conversion, and in the salvation of the Christian Church and religion, from extinction in the Roman world.

Though the pagans and idolaters found that they could not destroy the Christian Church and religion, yet they continued to make war with the faithful minority, in their individual isolated character, and they carry on this opposition through

another corporation or party, to which they delegate, or hand over their idolatrous power and influence, which is particularly described in this thirteenth chapter.

This corporation is represented by a beast that rises up out of the sea—not out of the earth or land. It comes up from the sea upon the land. It is a corporation. It first has an existence among the common mass of the Roman population, and then comes into notice and consideration among the Romans proper.

This beast and the dragon have both seven heads and ten horns, with this difference, that on the dragon the seven heads are crowned, but the horns are without crowns, while on the beast the horns are crowned, and the heads have on them, the name or names of blasphemy.

The seven heads and the ten horns, identify this corporation of men in their government, to a certain extent with that of the pagan Romans.

The meaning of these seven heads and ten horns, is given in the seventeenth chapter, and therefore, they will not, at present, be made the subject of any further comment, than that of remarking that the seven heads signify seven different kinds of government, which at different times have ruled in the Roman world; while the ten horns represent the ten different powers or states, which upon the breaking up of the Latin or Western empire, established themselves among the Roman population, and became part of the new corporation.

The beast was in form and perhaps in color like a leopard, with the exception of its feet and mouth, its feet were those of a bear and its mouth that of a lion. The leopard is remarkable for symmetry of form and beauty of color. Perhaps the leopard was used by Daniel to represent the Greeks, because, as a people they excelled in the admiration and cultivation of beautiful statuary and painting, and were noted for their taste and art in this respect, and for the use which they made of this taste and art in representing and honouring by beautiful images and pic-

tures, those deceased men and women whom they invoked as demons or mediators. May it not be that because the new or modern Latin corporation followed the Greeks in this kind of worship, that it is represented by a beast in form and color like a leopard. This kind of worship was authoritatively established in the Catholic church by the Greek Romans, with the co-operation of the bishop and church of Rome, and eventually, with the acquiescence and concurrence of the Latins in general.

The feet are those of a bear. The bear, in the book of Daniel, represents the corporation of the Medes and Persians. The bear tears in pieces with savage ferocity, an object of resentment, which comes within its reach and power. The Medo Persians, in their administration of law and justice, were notorious for their severe punishment of rebels and opposers. The casting of the enemies of Daniel with their wives and children, into the lion's den, is an instance of the severity of their penal inflictions.

This penal severity to rebels and opposers, is a striking trait of character in this modern Latin corporation.

The mouth of the beast was that of a lion, the animal symbolic of the Assyrians or Babylonians. The mouth of the lion, or speech of the lion, denotes the language of despotism—language, which inspires terror and overawes into abject submission. And such has been in its nature and effects, the language of the Latin Catholic community, whenever it has opened its mouth and uttered its doctrines and commands.

And the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority. The new, the modern, succeeds, not only to the force and a large share of the jurisdiction and influence vacated by the ancient corporation, but also to the seat or capitol. It is common to call the capitol of a country, the seat of government. And as the modern Latin corporation possesses in Rome, a city sanctioned by antiquity and the lingering sentiments and habits of the people, as the seat of supreme power and influence.

And I saw one of his heads as it were, wounded to death, (mortally wounded) and his deadly wound was healed.

After the division of the Roman empire into two states under two distinct emperors, they began to be distinguished from each other by the terms Greek and Latin, while both claimed the name of Roman.

The western was called the Latin empire, while the eastern was called the Greek; the one having Rome for the capitol, and the other Constantinople or new Rome; the former, continuing the use of the Latin language, as the language of law and government, and the other, in the course of time, discontinuing the use of the Latin for that of the Greek.

The head that was wounded and whose wound appeared to be mortal, was the imperial, autocratic government, founded by Diocletian and perpetuated by the Latin empire down to Augustulus. Odoacer, a barbarian king, having made a conquest of Rome and of a great part of Italy, forced Augustulus not only to resign the imperial office, but in his resignation to abolish the very office of western or Latin emperor.

With the concurrence of the emperor and senate, and by the command of the barbarian king, the office was abolished and Odoacer governed as patrician or lieutenant of the Greek emperor. Theodosio, the successor of Odoacer, governed under the same title. The imperial head now seemed mortally wounded, though it was not so fatally wounded in reality; the wound was not mortal but was afterwards healed, and the Latin corporation continued to live in this wounded state until the imperial office was made whole in the person of Charlemagne. The imperial office was not entirely abolished by the barbarians, but only partially. It continued partially abolished until Charlemagne, after governing Rome under the subordinate and dependent title of patrician, assumed the supreme and independent title of emperor.

Among the several principles of civilization, says Guizot,

which survived the destruction of the Latin empire, was the remembrance of the emperor, the idea of imperial majesty and of absolute power attached to the name of emperor. The name of the empire, the remembrance of that great and glorious society, still dwelt in the memory of many, and especially among the senators of cities, bishops, priests, and all those who could trace their origin to the Roman world. Among the barbarians themselves or their barbarian ancestors, many had witnessed the greatness of the Roman empire—they had served in its armies —they had conquered it. The image, the name of Roman civilization dazzled them, they felt a desire to imitate it, to bring it back again, to preserve some portion of it. . . . . An affectionate attachment for the empire, was, for a long time preserved in the Romish church. Hence, when she had succeeded in converting the barbarians, she endeavoured to re-establish the empire; she called upon the barbarian kings, she conjured them to become Roman emperors—to assume the privilege of Roman emperors, to enter into the same relation with the church which had existed between her and the Roman empire. This was the great object for which the bishops of the fifth and sixth centuries laboured, and which they thought they had accomplished when Charlemagne in the west, assumed the title of Roman emperor.

On the festival of Christmas, (says Gibbon,) and in the last year of the eighth century, Charlemagne appeared in the church of St. Peter, and, to gratify the vanity of Rome, he had exchanged the simple dress of his country for the habit of a patrician.

After the celebration of the holy mysteries, Leo suddenly placed a precious crown on his head and the dome resounded with the acclamations of the people, long life and victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God, the great and pacific emperor of the Romans.

The head and body of Charlemagne were consecrated by the royal unction; after the example of the Cæsars, he was saluted

or adored by the pontiff; his coronation oath represents a promise to maintain the faith and privileges of the church, and the first fruits were paid in his rich offerings to the shrine of the apostle.

The healing of the wounds which the Latin corporation had received in its head, led the Romans to regard it as an extraordinary and wonderful corporation. And all the world wondered after the beast—all the Roman population were surprised and delighted to see this great corporation thus restored to life and vigor.

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast. They venerated the old Pagan corporation for the power which had been derived from it to the new corporation. They fondly cherished and respected the absolute power which the old corporation had left for the new. And they worshipped the beast. They cherished and respected the new corporation, saying, who is like unto the beast, what corporation is like this one? Who is able to make war with the beast? What corporation is able to compete with it—can prevail over it and take away its power and rule.

5th verse. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies—in the words of Daniel he shall speak great words against the Most High or as the Most High."

This corporation will declare its will and issue its decrees and laws in the great name and authority of God, and thus profane that great name and authority. And power was given him to continue, to act, to flourish, to domineer for forty-two months, one thousand two hundred and sixty days—one thousand two hundred and sixty years.

6th verse. "And he opened his mouth to blaspheme against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle and them that dwell (tabernacle) in heaven."

The name of God stands here for his authority, the tabernacle of God for his worship, and they that dwell or tabernacle in heaven, for those who minister in divine service—the Christian

ministry. To blaspheme is to speak to the prejudice of sacred persons or things, and to pervert divine authority to the sanction of error and evil. In teaching the doctrine of transubstantiation as the truth of God, this corporation has blasphemed the authority, the worship and the ministers of God.

It blasphemes the name or authority of God when it claims for this doctrine the sanction of the Holy Ghost; when it teaches this commandment of men to be a doctrine of God, alleging divine authority for one of the most absurd and monstrous tenets ever proposed to human credulity. In this doctrine too, the worship or tabernacle of God is blasphemed, by converting the most sacred symbols of our religion into objects of idolatrous worship.

When the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are declared to be transubstantiated into the body and blood and soul and divinity of Christ, and are required to be worshipped accordingly, then the human nature of Christ in which God the word tabernacled among us is spoken of falsely and to its prejudice, and the most sacred part of Christian worship is blasphemed and turned into idolatry. The sacrifice of the mass in which the priest offers Christ for the living and the dead to have remission of pain or guilt, is surely a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit. In this doctrine too, the Christian ministry is blasphemed. To allege for them power to make God out of bread and wine, is to allege for them fictitious and impious authority to the prejudice of their real authority.

The ministers of Christ are also blasphemed when after their death they are sometimes canonized and made mediators, and invoked as such, in presence of their images.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is the undisputed doctrine of this corporation, being established by the decrees of councils, ratified by popes, and universally received.

7th. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and overcome them.

The saints here mean the remnant of professed Christians,

who, in the different Roman communities, were preserved in a pure faith and worship amidst the general apostacy. The overcoming of these Christians implies, that they will be successfully opposed so as to be kept in a state of depression. By the aid of emperors and kings, of crusades against heretical communities, of the inquisition and other means, the Roman Catholic Church has hitherto prevailed over those who dissent from its idolatrous worship.

And power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations. This corporation shall succeed in subjecting to its power and worship the pagan and heathen nations of the Latin world.

8th verse. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the earth.

All that dwell upon the earth, (holy land,) all of Latin Christianity, with the exception of the minority, who adhere to the one only Mediator and sacrifice, and whose title to eternal life is recognised in heaven, will render respect and submission to this divinity of power.

9th verse. If any man have an ear let him hear. Let him mark well what has just been said. Let him mark well and understand, that they are not the faithful, but the corrupt Christians in the Latin world who will glory in this long successful corporation. And let him be assured that it is destined for destruction; that it is not to be victorious for ever; that its victorious career, though long is not eternal; that he (10th verse) that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; that he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Here, in this prediction and assurance of the captivity and end of this mighty corporation, let the ministry who profess and practice a pure Christianity, take encouragement to bear patiently with the violent and persecuting measures of the majority, and persevere in their dissent and protestation, knowing that their per-

secuted and depressed cause will eventually be victorious and obtain the ascendancy.

Of the two Catholic corporations, Latin and Greek, which the Roman empire divided, we know by several marks, that the one described in this chapter must be the Latin and not the Greek.

It was in the Latin imperial corporation in which sprang up the ten predicted powers or States. It was the Latin imperial corporation whose head was apparently wounded to death in the person of Augustulus, and was healed in the person of Charlemagne. And it is this corporation whose name, Lateinos, when the Greek letters which compose it are taken for numerical figures, and are added together, amounts to six hundred and sixty-six, and this name is also the name of a man. But we are here anticipating what will be explained when we come to the last verse of the chapter.

The one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the flourishing of this modern Latin corporation, probably began in the eighth century. According to the prophet Daniel, the little Roman State or power was to be the presiding power and State in this modern Latin corporation, and during the period mentioned, was to possess supreme power over the people of God, over laws and over times, (festivals, the calendar.)

In the latter half of the eighth century, Pepin, the Mayor of France, with the sanction and authority of the Bishop of Rome, was invested with the royal title and authority in place of Childene, who was deposed for the purpose. In speaking of this event and of the power and influence which Rome then began to exercise in the Latin or western world, Gibbon uses language to the same effect with that in which Daniel foretells the supremacy of the Roman State at this period. The words of Daniel are, that they (the saints, and times and laws) shall be given into his hands (the Roman State and see) during the one thousand two hundred and sixty years; while the words of Gibbon are: "Under the sacerdotal monarchy of St. Peter, the "nations began to resume the practice of seeking on the banks

"of the Tiber (Rome) their kings, their laws, and the oracles of "their fate."

The Latins, or Franks, under Charles Martel, in the year 732, gained a great victory over the Mahomedans, and saved the west of Europe from falling under the Mahomedan power and religion. About this time Rome and Italy, refusing to abandon their venerable images at the command of the Greek emperor, began that separation from the Greeks which was consummated by the translation of the empire to Charlemagne. About the same time also one of the popes, in an epistle addressed to the Greek emperor, boasts that all the kingdoms of the west regarded St. Peter as God upon earth, and presented their homage to the viceregent of Christ. In the year 732, in a council of Lateran called by the pope, the relative worship of images was authoritatively established among the Romans, and Rome and the Latins bagan their independence, and their disregard of Greek rule and authority. Perhaps the year 732 is as early a date as we may fix upon to begin the flourishing period of the modern Latin corporation. In that year this corporation began to manifest its victorious physical power to the world, and to come into notice and consideration among the Romans proper.

DISCOURSE X.

Rev. xiii. 11—18.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beasts before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwelt therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six (666)."

The beast here described comes up not out of the sea but out of the land, to signify that the corporation which the beast represents is to come into life among the Romans proper. It is the Roman corporation proper as distinct from the Roman or Latin corporation Catholic. And it is the Roman corporation proper as a teaching corporation. Its coming up out of the land determines it to be Roman. Its horns like those of a lamb determine that its power is apparently Christian—intellectual, moral power—power of a meek and mild nature. And while the place of its origin and the nature of its power determine it to be the Roman Church, its speaking as a dragon determines it to be the Roman Church in its character of a false teacher. To speak as a dragon is to speak and teach falsely of God, as

the old serpent did in the garden of Eden. And hence this beast is subsequently called the false prophet or teacher.

Joshua was required in all difficulties needing the council and direction of God to stand before the high priest who was to ask counsel and direction for him, after the judgment of Urim before the Lord, and that counsel and direction both he and all the children of Israel were bound to follow.

The revelation of the counsel of God by Urim and Thumim was vouchsafed only to the high priest, and was sought only in important cases of doubt and difficulty. When the mode of revelation by Urim and Thumim ceased, God raised up a succession of prophets that the people of Israel might have recourse to them for divine counsel and direction, especially in uncertain and disputed points of doctrine and law.

The Roman corporation or Church has been exercising an office and mission of this nature, for the Catholic corporation, for many hundred years past.

As the mother and head of all other churches, she has required docility and submission to her teaching, to her nurture and admonitions, from all Christian communities in the world. Whether the power of desire and infallible teaching resides in the see of Rome as distinct from the Church of Rome, or whether in both in their united capacity it is a matter of history that the Church of Rome as founded by St. Peter and possessing his see by succession, has claimed to be the head and mother of all other Churches, and has performed for Roman Christendom what the Jewish high priests and afterwards a succession of prophets did for the Church of Israel. Roman Catholics have sought unto the see and Church of Rome for divine authoritative instruction and judgment, as the people of Israel in ancient days sought unto the high priest and prophets.

The Apostolic see and Church have been for many ages in the habit of deciding for all Churches in communion with Rome their controversies and difficulties, and have required their decisions to be received as authoritative and final. Gregory the

seventh gives us a correct description of this high prerogative in the following language. (Epist. 21, lib. 4, Concil. tom. 20, p. 332.) "The holy fathers receiving with great veneration and preserving this prerogative, sovereignly conferred upon the blessed Peter the prince of the apostles by a heavenly decree, have in their general councils and other meetings and acts, denominated the holy Roman Church the universal mother, and received evidences of it in doctrinal decrees for the confirmation of the faith and in judicial decisions, agreeing in this with one voice that all great affairs and especially the judgment of all ecclesiastical causes, should be referred to it as the mother and head, and that no one should or can appeal from it, nor reverse or reconsider its decisions."

In this high office and prerogative the see and Church of Rome have performed the part of a false teacher and prophet, and have spoken falsely concerning God. In teaching that deceased men and women may consistently with the will of God be invoked as demons or mediators with God, and that we may make use of images in our religious worship, and bow down before them, the Roman Church as plainly contradicts the revealed will and commandments of God as the serpent did when he taught our first parents that they might eat of the forbidden fruit, and that they should not surely die by so doing, but should become wise to know good and evil. In the long controversy on image worship in the eighth and ninth centuries, the Church and bishops of Rome took a leading part, and did not give over their exertions until they had made the use and adoration of images in divine service a law of the Catholic Church, Greek and Latin.

Indeed, in all the gross and idolatrous corruptions introduced into the Catholic Church, the Church of Rome has taken the lead, and acted as the prime teacher and deceiver. The Church of Rome acts the part of a false prophet in teaching the Roman population to do homage to the Catholic corporation, as a corporation possessed of divine authority.

And further, the Church of Rome not merely preaches up but exercises the divine authority of the Catholic corporation, for so it reads in the 12th verse. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed.

The Roman corporation exerciseth the divine authority of the Catholic corporation with the looking on and tacit consent of the latter.

These two corporations are in close friendship and union, and mutually sustain each other. The Roman corporation for being allowed by the Catholic corporation to exercise Catholic authority, preaches up the sacred nature and divinity of that authority, and the Catholic allows the local corporation to act in its stead, and with its authority, from respect to the latter as the seat of inspired, divine, infallible teaching.

Verse 13th. And he (the Roman corporation) doeth great wonders, (miracles, acts of divine authority,) so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, commands penal inflictions to come down from the high places of power and influence upon the subject population as a spectacle to religious worshippers to excite their fears and overawe them into submission and devotion.

The 14th verse. And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth (land) by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, (he deceiveth the idolatrous Christian worshippers by those acts of divine authority which he had the ability to do with the looking on and consent of the Catholic body), saying unto them that dwell upon the earth, (land) that they should make an image to (or for) the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live, instructing the idolatrous Christians that they should fabricate some form of power to represent the divinity, the divine authority of the Catholic body.

15th verse. And he had power to give life unto the image of

the beast, so that the image of the beast could both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

The Roman corporation was able to put self-acting power into this representative fictitious form of divine authority, so that the latter could enforce obedience and submission by a personal power reaching to a cutting off or excommunication.

To make an image to or for the beast does not necessarily mean that the image was made in the shape of the beast. It was something fabricated to represent or stand for the beast in his divinity or divine power—to represent him as an object of worship. An image made for worship is regarded as the representative of some divinity in his invisible power and influence.

Under the old Roman empire images were used to represent the emperor in his sacred supreme authority, and primitive Christians were sometimes punished for refusing certain acts of ceremonial worship before these imperial images.

We read that Adam was made in the image of God. He was not the image of God in respect to his form or body, but in respect to his dominion and other properties. The word image is sometimes used in the sense of a representative of the authority of another. In this sense Adam was the image of God. In this sense the viceroy is the image of the king. And we may attach this sense to the image of the beast, and define it to represent in a sensible and active form the divine power of the heart.

It will be noticed, that the same divine power is exhibited to us as connected with each one of three living things—that of the first, beast; that of the second, heart, and that of the animated image. This divine power is not divided among the three, but exists in its unity and plenitude in each one of the three—as one and the same power it belongs to the first beast; is with his consent exercised by the second beast; and is actively, and not in mere dumb show or theory, represented by the image. The whole is common to each one of three forms—that of the

Catholic corporation, that of the Roman or local corporation, and what can the third form be but that of the papacy in its catholic character. The Pope is the image or representative of the Catholic Church in the plenitude of her corporate divine authority. And hence he has equalled his authority to that of Catholic councils, and has opposed and exalted himself above every ruler on earth—above all that is called God or that is worshipped. The fashioning and animating this extraordinary image was a work of the eighth and ninth centuries, though the material or papacy had, in a rude, imperfect form, a previous existence.

According to Pope Pius the 2d, the Roman Church, before the time of Constantine and of the Nicene council, was of no consideration. After the alliance of the church with the State, there was a certain degree of precedence conferred upon the see and church of the imperial city. Three prelates had before this enjoyed a certain degree of pre-eminence over the rest of the bishops, viz.: the Bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria; and to these the Bishop of Constantinople was added when the imperial residence was transferred to that city. These four prelates answered to the four pretorian prefects created by Constantine, and it is possible that in this very century they were distinguished by the Jewish title of patriarchs. Though equal privileges were conferred upon these four patriarchs, yet the Roman see ranked first, and the see of Constantinople second after it. It was not long, however, before a jealousy sprang up between these two sees of new and old Rome. And the bishops of old Rome began to plead claims of supremacy for their see as being the see of St. Peter, to whom had been confided the keys of the kingdom of heaven in an especial manner. They alleged that this high authority had been transmitted from St. Peter to the bishops, his successors in this see.

In the year 588, the Greek emperor conferred the title of Occumenical, or universal, upon the patriarch of Constantinople. Pelagius, who was then Bishop of Rome, opposed the applica-

tion of this to the Bishop of Constantinople. Gregory the Great, the immediate successor of Pelagius, renewed the opposition, and writes to the Greek emperor in the following language: "The direction and primacy of the whole Church have been given to St. Peter, yet we do not call him the universal apostle, and yet the holy man John, my brother, is ambitious to be called the universal bishop. To Constantina, the empress, he complains of the insult which had been offered to the see of Rome; and while he confesses that the sons of Gregory have merited such chastisement, he reminds the empress that St. Peter, at least, was sinless, and undeserving the outrage which had been offered to him.

"If at first the sort of superiority assumed by the see of "Rome was founded for the most part on its imperial dignity, "this foundation was now changed for one of a more spiritual "nature, admirably calculated to impose upon the ignorant "proselytes, and the name of St. Peter became more venerable "than of Augustus or Trajan; and his chair, as it was occupied "by the successors of the apostle and the vicars of Christ, in- "spired a deeper awe into the blind and superstitious multitude "than the throne of all the Cæsars. At the death of Gregory "the great, the Bishop of Rome, though he might in vain dis- "pute with the patriarch of Constantinople the name of uni- "versal supremacy, was unquestionably acknowledged to be the "leading member of the ecclesiastical aristocracy of Europe, the "spiritual head or president of the western hierarchy.

"Roman Catholic writers assert, that in the year 606, the "disputed title of Oecumenical, or universal, was transferred "from the Greek to the Roman patriarch by the emperor Pho- "cas." (Waddington.)

But the temporalities which, in the eighth century, were conferred upon Rome by Pepin, and confirmed by Charlemagne, failed not to give great additional efficacy to her spiritual claims, claims which she had already advanced with some boldness, but

which she was now qualified to press, if so disposed to press them, to the last extremity of usurpation.

The Romans now took it into their heads to make the Bishop of Rome the representative (the image) of the Catholic Church, in *the plenitude* of her divine authority.

"After the time of Charlemagne, as if impatient of the tedious "progress of gradual usurpation, the spirit of papacy called into "existence, by an effort of amazing audacity, a new system of "government and a new code of principles, which led, by a "single step, to the most absolute power. The false decretals "were imposed on the credulity of mankind. Still the moment "was not yet arrived in which it was possible to enforce all the "rights so boldly claimed on their authority; and though some "ground was gained by Pope Nicholas I., (died 867,) their "efforts were not brought into full operation till the pontificate "of Gregory VII., (1073—1086.") Waddington, Chap. XIV. 111.

Adrian the first, during his pontificate, (772–795,) brought to public notice, certain forged instruments, called the false decretals, and the donation of Constantine. They have been termed the two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the Pope. These two most celebrated monuments of human imposture and credulity, which were put forth about the conclusion of the eighth century, were immediately, and universally received as genuine. "Probably they were the composition of some monk or scribe of that age. Their direct object, was the unlimited advancement of the Roman See; and for that purpose, the Decretals furnished the spiritual, the Donation, the temporal authority; the former, professing to be a compilation of the epistles and decrees of primitive popes and early emperors, derived from the first ages, the ghostly omnipotence of Rome. While the latter, proclaimed no less, than that Constantine, on removing the seat of government to the east, had consigned the western empire to the temporal, as well

as spiritual government of the Bishop of Rome. Unbounded dominion over churches, and nations, and kings, was delegated to the successor of St. Peter, and the vicar of Christ. It was asserted, that the original deed of the emperor had been recently discovered; the monstrous forgery, went forth and spread itself through the world without confutation, seemingly without suspicion; and it continued for above six hundred years, to form the most prominent, and not the least solid, among the bulwarks of papacy."—(Waddington.)

Among these false decretals or edicts of early popes and emperors, was an edict of the Emperor Constantine. It reads, "We, together with our Prefects, the Senate, all men of rank, and the whole population of the empire, have judged it useful, that as the holy Peter is seen to have been constituted the vicar of the Son of God on earth, the pontiffs also, who are successors of that prince of the apostles, should obtain, by concession from us and our empire, the power of a princely rule, more ample than our imperial serenity possesses, electing that prince of the apostles and his successors, assured intercessors for us with God, and we decree, that the Holy Roman Church, shall be reverently honoured like our imperial power, and the sacred chair of the blessed Peter, more exalted than our earthly imperial throne, ascribing to it an imperial power, dignity, strength, and merit of honor; and ordaining, that it shall have dominion, as well over the principal seats, Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, as over all the Church of God throughout the world. And he who is for the time, Pontiff of the Holy Roman Church, shall be superior, and prince to all the priests of the world, and whatever shall be ordained, in order to the honor of God and the stability of the faith of Christians, shall be disposed by his judgment."

These forged edicts of early popes and emperors, agree in representing the bishop of the Roman city, to be invested with a supreme plenary power in the catholic body; they teach, that

without the command or consent of the Pope, no council could be held—that bishops cannot be definitely judged, except by the pope—that his judgment was irreversible and final—that the apostolical seat was constituted by Christ, the hinge and head of all churches, and that as a door hangs and turns by the hinges, so by Christ's appointment, the whole Catholic Church depends, and moves on the authority of this holy See.

"The wisest and most impartial among the Roman Catholic "writers, not only acknowledge, but have even taken pains to "demonstrate, that from the time of Louis the Debonaire, "(ninth century,) the ancient rules of ecclesiastical govern- "ment were gradually changed in Europe, by the counsels and "instigation of the Court of Rome, and new laws substituted "in their place. The European princes suffered themselves to "be divested of the supreme authority in religious matters, "which they had derived from Charlemagne; the episcopal "power was greatly diminished, and even the authority of both "provincial and general councils began to decline."

The Roman pontiffs, elate with their overgrown prosperity, and the daily accessions that were made to their authority, were eagerly bent upon persuading all, and had indeed, the good fortune to persuade many, that the Bishop of Rome, was constituted by Jesus Christ, supreme legislator and judge of the Church universal, and that, therefore, the bishops derived all their authority from the pope, nor could the councils determine anything without his permission and consent. In order to gain credit to this new ecclesiastical system, so different from the ancient rules of Church government, and to support the haughty pretensions of the pontiffs to supremacy and independence, it was necessary to produce the authority of ancient deeds to stop the mouths of those who were disposed to set bounds to their usurpations. The bishops of Rome were aware of this, and as those means were deemed the most lawful, that tended best to the accomplishment of their purposes, they employed some of

their most ingenious and zealous partizans in forging conventions, acts of councils, epistles, and the like records, by which it might appear, that in the first ages of the Church, the Roman pontiffs were clothed with the same spiritual majesty and supreme authority which they now assumed. Among these fictitious supports of the papal dignity, the famous decretal epistles, said to have been written by the pontiffs of the primitive time, deserve to be stigmatized.

Gregory the Seventh, in the seventh century, confidently appeals to those false decretals, to show that the pope, in the catholicity and plenitude of his power, may, by his sole authority, condemn and excommunicate—that the apostolical seat has the power, without the concurrence of a synod, of releasing whoever, by an unjust synod, has been condemned, and of condemning without a synod, whoever it thinks proper; and this, by the sovereignty which Peter held by the word of Christ.

Referring to these false decretals, Gregory says, "the Popes Leo, Virgil, and Gregory, each eminent in authority, testify in their (false) decrees, almost in the same language, that the holy Roman Church bestows their office on other churches, so that they are called to a part in the care, but not to a plenitude of power; which shows clearly, that no bishop has as great power given him over his own flock, as the apostolical pontiff; who, although he distributes his care to the individual bishops, yet by no means divests himself of his universal and sovereign power; just as a king does not diminish his regal power, by dividing his kingdom among different dukes, counts, or judges. As then, the apostolical lord has such a sovereign power over every Church, that even against the will of the bishop, he may direct anything in it, according to the canons, who can deny that he can condemn every where, the nations, both the subjects of bishops, and the bishops themselves, who condemn the apostolical command. Every one who desires to be a bishop, should especially teach his people, that they should, without

contradiction, obey the canons (the forged) of the holy fathers which, as has already been said, enjoin on all, a supreme obedience to the apostolic seat. Whoever then, would render an appropriate obedience to his own legitimate pastor, must also render a supreme obedience to the apostolical lord."

The famous Bernard, flourished in the twelfth century. In a letter addressed to Pope Eugenius III., he gives the following description of the catholicity—the plenitude and supremacy of papal power. "Who are you? A mighty priest, the highest pontiff. You are the first among bishops, the heir of the apostles; in primacy, Abel; in government, Noah; in patriarchate, Abraham; in order, Melchizedeck; in dignity, Aaron; in authority, Moses; in judgment, Samuel; in power, Peter; in unction, Christ. You are he, to whom the keys have been delivered, to whom the flock has been entrusted. Others, indeed, there are, who are door-keepers of heaven, and pastors of sheep, but you are pre-eminently so, as you are more singularly distinguished by the inheritance of both characters. They have their flocks assigned them, each one his own; to you, the whole are intrusted, as one flock to one shepherd, neither of the sheep only, but of the pastors also; you alone, are the pastor of all. Where is my proof of this? in the word of God. For to which, I say, not of bishops, but of apostles, was the universal flock so positively intrusted? If thou lovest me, Peter, feed my sheep. . . . According to your canons, others are called in to a share of the duty, you, to a plenitude of power; the power of others is restrained by fixed limits, your's is extended, even over those who have received power over others. Are you not able, if cause arise, to exclude a bishop from heaven, to depose him from his dignity, and even to consign him over to Satan? These, your privileges, stand unassailable, both through the keys, and the flock which has been confided to you."

Here we have in the pope of that day, the fabricated acting image, or representative of the catholic body, in the plenitude of catholic divine authority.

Verses 16 and 17. "And he (the Roman beast,) causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or (either) the name of the (catholic) beast, or the number of his name—the name open and manifest, or concealed in its numerical value."

Through the machinations of the Church of Rome, all, of whatever rank, means or condition, are made to pledge themselves in thought and deed, the obedient servants of the catholic body, and no one, unless he thus, more or less, openly pledges himself, is received among the clergy, and allowed to exercise the office of a divine or teacher.

Verse 18. "Here is wisdom, Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the beast, (the catholic body,) for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six."

The letters which spell the name of the catholic body, must, when taken in their numerical value and added together, make the sum of six hundred and sixty-six; and this name must be the name of some man or ruler. Ireneus, a bishop of the second century, determines the name to be Lateinos, a king from whom the Latins derived their name.

Ireneus was a Greek, and an eminent Christian minister. The name of Lateinos, (says he,) contains the number of six hundred and sixty-six. And it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called; for they are Latins who now reign, but in this we will not glory.

The Greeks used the letters of their alphabet to represent numbers, as well as sounds. The first letter stood for one; the second for two; the letter I stood for ten; then the next letter stood for 20, and the next for 30; the letter R stood for 100; then the next letter stood for 200, and the next for 300, and so on to the last letter, which stood for 800.

L	stood for 30,
A	1
T	300
E	5
I	10
N	50
O	70
S	200
	666

Some persons have objected to the word Latcinos, because Ireneus spells it with ei, instead of a single i, but an educated Greek, living in the age next after that of St. John, could not have been mistaken in spelling the word—he must have known that his manner of spelling it, was common to his day, and that of St. John.

When we consider that this corporation must be one of the two catholic corporations, eastern and western, into which the old Roman empire divided, that it was the western in which appeared the ten powers or states, that it is the western corporation which speaks in the Latin language—that it is distinguished among the Greeks by the name of Latin, and that the Greek letters of this name, taken in their numerical value, make six hundred and sixty-six, we can have no doubt, that the catholic corporation, symbolically described and named, is the Latin, or western, and not the Greek, or eastern.

We have a description of both these corporations in the book of Daniel; the Latin corporation is described in the seventh chapter, while the Greek corporation is described in the eighth chapter.

DISCOURSE XI.

Rev. xiv.

In the preceding chapter the attention of the Apostle is first directed to the sea, and he saw a beast rise out of the sea. This beast is the Latin body corporate, emerging from the more rude or the western population. The Apostle's attention in that chapter is next directed to the land, and he beholds another beast coming up out of the land, which is subsequently called the false prophet or teacher. This beast is a body corporate, which was to arise and grow unto strength among the Romans proper.

Now, however, in this fourteenth chapter, the Apostle's attention is turned towards Mount Zion and the temple.

Verses 1—5. "And I looked, and lo a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

"And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne and before the four beasts and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God."

These hundred and forty and four thousand are first brought to our notice in the seventh chapter, where we learn that they were selected out of the different tribes of Israel, and sealed with the seal of the living God, and that they were thus selected and

sealed before the four winds of the earth were let loose upon the land and the sea.

The language used supposes an apostacy—a falling away of the majority of Roman Christians unto idolatrous practices. It supposes that this falling away would precede that general breaking loose of the barbarians upon the people of the empire, which occurred in the fifth century. And it supposes, too, that through these calamitous invasions, and through the period of the apostacy, there would continue a small remnant of Christians free from the prevailing corruptions of Christian worship.

This remnant of the servants of God, confirmed in the profession of a pure worship, is brought to our notice again in the ninth chapter, in which we are informed that the Mahomedans of Arabia, who were commissioned to torment idolators, were forbidden to hurt those men who had the seal of God upon their foreheads—those hundred and forty and four thousand who adhered to a pure worship amidst the general falling away. These faithful Christians are brought to our notice again in the twelfth chapter, where they are described as a remnant of the seed of the woman—as the remnant who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ—as the remnant with whom the dragon, or party opposed to the Christian profession, went to make war, after the Church had escaped from that inundation of foreign pagans, which threatened to drown Roman civilization, and with it the Christian Church.

It would seem from the next (thirteenth) chapter, that the dragon carries on the war through another beast, to whom he gives power over his throne and dominion. This successor of the dragon, during the twelve hundred and sixty years of his successful power, makes war with these saints and overcomes them; and all of Roman Christianity submit to him with the exception of this remnant, whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The meaning is, that during this period of successful Roman Catholic corporate power, there would continue among the dif-

ferent Roman communities a small remnant who, assured of the certain though long delayed destruction of that power, would not be seduced or forced into submission.

This assurance was the secret of their perseverance in a pure faith and practice. Here is the patience and faith of the saints. And now here in this fourteenth chapter this remnant is brought to our notice once more.

The Apostle, looking towards Mount Zion and the temple, sees a Lamb standing on the Mount, and with him these hundred and forty and four thousand, which have the seal of his Father, the living God, upon their foreheads.

The place and the posture in which these Israelites are found are those of religious worship. In this place of worship they appear with the Lamb, to signify that it is through Christ, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, that they have access to the temple and mercy seat and favour of God—that it is through his sacrifice and mediation that they are allowed to come near to the presence of God, and ask for mercy and favour.

While they are standing on the Mount with the Lamb, the Apostle hears a voice from heaven, from the inner parts of the temple, and this voice was very loud, and was accompanied with the voice of harpers singing before the throne of God a song which none of the men of the land could learn, excepting these hundred and forty and four thousand, who were redeemed from among them.

In foretelling the deliverance of the faithful Israelites from their oppressors, and their introduction into a happy state of liberty and prosperity, the prophet Isaiah uses the following language, (chap. li.) "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The language of St. John is of a similar import with that of Isaiah. It imports that the remnant of pure worshippers who

in Roman communities and under the Roman oppressors have continued to exist during the twelve hundred and sixty years, are now, at the end of this period, to be delivered from their oppressors, and pass into a free and prosperous state; in other words, men of their worship and morals and character, are now to flourish in Roman communities, while the votaries and advocates of a corrupted Christianity are to decline.

Let us now attend to the description given of these characters. "These are they which which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins."

They are called virgins to signify their purity in respect to idolatrous practices; for when the scriptures speak of idolatry, they commonly use the words fornication and adultery. The religion of ancient idolaters was literally as well as figuratively a system of lewdness. The worship of this remnant is not defiled with idolatrous ceremonies and invocations. They invoke the one only Mediator between God and man—the Man Christ Jesus—to the exclusion of the mediation of martyrs and deceased saints, and they make use of no images in their invocations. Unlike the majority, they strictly adhere to the doctrine and worship of the deceased and risen Man Christ Jesus, as the one and the only man whom it is lawful to invoke and worship as a mediator in the Court of Heaven.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They have followed the Lamb unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God—the heavenly Jerusalem, and unto the presence of the throne of God, and there they join in the celestial worship.

Whether they regard Christ in his incarnation, his obedience, his sufferings and death, his resurrection, his ascension into heaven and his session and intercession there at the right hand of power, they follow him in their gratitude and confidence, through all, up to the very throne of God in the celestial city. They cleave to the merits and intercessions of Christ, as all sufficient to their eternal acceptance with God in heaven.

And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

The founders and advocates of the old pagan religion, acted upon the principle that it is lawful to make use of falsehood and deception when they are for the benefit of mankind. And this pagan principle in the course of a few centuries came into practice among the professors of Christianity.

Eusebius, a Christian bishop of the fourth century, could propose the question whether it were lawful to use falsehood as a medicine for those who may derive advantage from such a method. He quotes the authority of Plato, though he would not go so far as Plato, and justify falsehood, but he thought that illusion or dissimulation might be innocently used for praiseworthy ends. Jerome, in the fifth century, ascribed dissimulation to the apostles Peter and Paul, on the occasion related in the second chapter of the epistle to the Galatians. St. Augustine, however, severely reproved him as guilty of a great slander upon these Apostles.

Gregory, bishop of Rome, wrote in the sixth century his book of dialogues, which is filled with the most extravagant stories of miracles, altogether unworthy of belief. He is excused by the Roman Catholic historian, Fleury, on the ground that he wrote this book for the benefit of ignorant soldiers and barbarians, and that a miracle did more good, and was to them more convincing than the best syllogisms.

These dialogues of Gregory were in use for many generations after him, and were followed by the ridiculous legends of the monks. What absurd miracles and impious frauds were fabricated and preached during the dark ages. In those days Christians had itching ears, and they turned away their ears from the truth and were turned into fables. And these fables and falsehoods were invented and published for idolatrous purposes. Idolatry and fiction and falsehood go together. And no one who worketh abomination or maketh a lie, no idolaters and liars

have any inheritance in the kingdom of God. To fabricate and publish a false miracle for the purpose of sanctioning and sustaining an idolatrous principle or practice is a daring impiety. O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honour, be not thou united.

But while these authors and preachers of lying wonders walked in craftiness and handled the word of God deceitfully, there were always some few who renounced these things of dishonesty, and endeavoured by the manifestation of the truth to commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And these are they, who, in being without guile in their treatment of Christian truth are without fault before the throne of God, in the sight of the God of truth.

These were redeemed from the earth, redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. These are saved and emancipated from that idolatrous slavery under which they had been born, and they are but a small number in comparison of that greater number to be saved and emancipated in a future age. The first fruits were but a diminutive part of the whole harvest. And there is to follow a harvest of such Christians. We have an account of this harvest, in the latter part of the chapter.

Verses 6 and 7. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people. Saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters.'"

An angel had been introduced (in the eighth chapter,) flying through the midst of heaven, for the purpose of impressing on our minds a sense of the severity of the three last woes here threatened. Angels are introduced flying in the midst of heaven, to impress on our minds a sense of the great severity of the last

woe in which the ruin of Rome, of the worshippers of the divinity of the Roman Catholic church, and of its representative, the papacy, is to be consummated.

The first angel (we perceive,) addresses his message not only to them that dwell on the land, (the nation of Israel,) but to every nation and tongue and people.

This angel calls upon all idolatrous communities, whether Christian or Pagan, whether professing Christianity or some other religion, to fear and give glory to God, and to worship the Former of heaven and earth, for that the time of judgment upon their idolatry had come, and that heaven would bear with them no longer.

The apostle in preaching to the Athenians, on the subject of their demon or mediator worship, and of their use of images in this worship, calls upon them to abandon their mediators and images and worship the God who made the world and all things therein, and who is omnipresent in his divinity and power, and not confined to any particular temples or images. The apostle also in his preaching assured them, that though God had winked at (had suffered) these times in which men ignorantly invoked demons and fell down before images, yet that now He commands all men every where to repent of their idolatry, and has, in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, given assurance to all men that at an appointed time he would judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ.

So here the angel flying through the midst of heaven, in his preaching the gospel to Christian and other communities who invoke a multiplicity of mediators and fall down before images, assures them that the hour of God's judgment when he would not longer bear with their idolatrous worship was at hand, and that they should render their worship to the great author of all things which are in heaven and on the land and in the waters. Under the gospel as well as under the law, God allows not his glory to be given to another, nor his presence to graven images.

In this truth the gospel is everlasting, is the same yesterday, to day, and forever.

Verse 8. "And there followed another angel, saying Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

There is an allusion here to philters or love potions which impure women gave to those whom they wished to inspire with an insane passion, and seduce and bend to their will.

The angel denounces the subversion of Rome as a punishment upon her, because the nations of her commission had imbibed those idolatrous doctrines, or notions of her fornication and teaching, which had infused into them a mania or fanatical rage for her mode of worship, and an insane, blind submission to her authority.

It has indeed been by appeals and arguments addressed to passion and prejudice, that Rome has been enabled to triumph over reason and common sense, and to entice the nations into her idolatry, and to bind them to her will and rule. Transubstantiation and image worship in the establishment of which Rome took the lead, were triumphs of party passion and fanaticism over reason and common sense.

Verses 9–12. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

All who pledge themselves to the ministry and service of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as all who respect its authority,

and that of the pope as divine and infallible, are according to the angel now destined to the punishment and torture of a reprobate mind, and a reprobate state. The unwilling conviction of hated truth will be to them like an intense suffocating fire, torturing them forever.

This fatal doom of the majority is set forth as an inducement to the minority to persevere in their obedience and faith.

13th verse. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me; Write Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirits that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

The angel who denounced the worshippers of the beast and his image, and all who received his mark, is followed by a voice from heaven pronouncing the blessedness of the martyrs for Christ as being destined to rest from all their works of faith, and charity, and receive the reward of them in a future state. The introduction of the words in this place would seem intended to encourage the minority, under some severe temporary persecution which they were about to suffer, perhaps the three-and-a half years which terminate the 1260.

Verses 14–16. "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud, one sat like unto the son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud, thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the harvest was reaped."

The hundred and forty and four thousand redeemed from the earth were the first fruits—here is the general harvest.

When our Lord sent forth the seventy disciples to preach the gospel, he said unto them: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he may send forth labourers into his harvest." On another occasion he says to his disciples: "Say not ye, there are yet

four months, and then cometh harvest; behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." As if he had said, that there are multitudes who, by instruction, have become ripe for the reception of the gospel and for gathering into Christian societies. The minds of the sincere and the upright among the Jews were as prepared for the doctrine and dispensation of the Messiah, as wheat fully ripe is ready to be reaped and gathered into barns.

The apostles and ministers of Christ were the reapers appointed for this purpose.

In the harvest spoken of here by St. John, the upright and good among the Romans are now prepared to receive the truth as it is in Christ, and to separate themselves from the Roman communion, and form themselves into new societies and congregations.

The golden crown upon the Son of Israel, and his sitting upon a cloud, are symbolic of the coming of his gospel in great power and influence among mankind; while the sickle in his hand, and the call addressed to him to thrust in his sickle and reap, signify that he is about to gather the people unto himself.

And when all the upright and good are withdrawn from the Roman communion, its ruin will be inevitable and speedy.

Verses 17—20. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out

of the wine-press, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs.

The reaping of the vine of the earth is done at the command of an angel who had power over fire, who had charge of the fire of the altar, whose business related to punishment.

This circumstance intimates that the vintage is to be understood in a punitive sense, and this sense is confirmed by the casting of the grapes into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, and the flowing of blood from the trodden grapes to the depth of the horses' bridles, and to the distance of a thousand six hundred furlongs, the length of the holy land.

When those who are truly Christian in their sentiments and conduct are spoken of under the figure of wheat, those of opposite sentiments and conduct are spoken of under the head of tares or chaff; here they are spoken of under the figure of grapes of blood, ripe, to be cut and cast into the wine-press and trodden under foot.

The prophet Isaiah compares the house of Israel to a vineyard planted with the choicest vine, and provided with all things necessary to insure a good vintage. But when its owner looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant, and he looked for judgment, and behold oppression; and for righteousness, and behold a cry. The community of Israel, notwithstanding its divine institutions, had brought forth a generation of unjust and tyrannical men. And so the produce of the Roman vineyard will be grapes of bood. The Roman Catholic community will become notorious as a community in which the heartless oppressors and bloody persecutors of Christians of a pure worship will have the ascendancy and rule.

This generation of persecutors is, however, destined for degradation and contempt. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden with the feet. The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me; he hath

called an assembly against me to crush my young men. The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press. I will tread the people in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my garments. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. From the commencement of our Saviour's public ministry to the destruction of Jerusalem, was to the Jews the period of harvest, during which time, those of honest and good hearts among them were gathered into Christian societies. But after the period of harvest there followed a period of vintage—a period of terrible calamity and degradation upon the unbelieving Jews. The people of the Roman prince came and destroyed their city and sanctuary, and Jerusalem and the Jews have ever since been trodden under foot.

So also after the better part of Roman Catholic Christians shall be gathered into new Christian societies, the remainder are destined for a state of degradation and contempt—for some fearful judgment. This chapter has called our attention to the time when the remnant of Christians of a pure worship, having passed through the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of their oppression and persecution, are about to enter in a flourishing condition, and to increase from the first fruits into a general harvest, while their oppressors and persecutors are to sink into a state of condemnation and ignominy. In the last part of this chapter we are brought down beyond the one thousand two hundred and sixty years into the third woe; and in the next two chapters we have the several particulars of that woe under the figure of seven vials full of the wrath of God, poured out upon the earth by seven angels.

DISCOURSE XII.

Rev. xv. and xvi.

Chap. xv. 1–4. "And I saw another sign in heaven great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, &c. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways thou king of saints. Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorify thy name; for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest."

From the 6th to the 12th chapters the apostle conducts us through a period of history, beginning soon after his own age, and reaching down to the third and last woe, contained in the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

From the 12th to the 15th chapters he conducts us over the same period down to the same date, for the purpose of communicating additional information. Having thus twice conducted us down to the third or last woe, he now in the 15th and 16th chapters gives us a symbolic description of that woe in the particulars of the seven last plagues in which is filled up the wrath of God.

These last seven plagues being the inflictions of an angry providence, will complete the decline and fall of Roman idolatrous power, both Catholic and local. The measure of Roman prosperous corporate apostacy from a pure Christianity, being filled up, the measure of its punishment will now also be filled up unto its utter decline and ruin, and the servants of God who had been in an afflicted and persecuted condition during the

1260 prosperous years of the apostacy are now described as victorious over their persecutors and oppressors, as having gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.

We must suppose that they had witnessed the overthrow of Roman power, like the Israelites had witnessed that of Egyptian power at the Red Sea, and that like the Israelites on that occasion they celebrate their escape and victory in an appropriate song. In this song they praise the greatness and justice of God for those extraordinary events of divine providence which have brought ruin upon the oppressors and opposers of true religion, and are about to confer upon the true religion honour and influence among all nations.

Their standing upon a solid sea—a sea of glass mingled with fire, signifies that they are in a state of security from the angry passions of the turbulent portion of society, as the infliction of the last woe or seven last plagues, will place them beyond the reach of harm, and persecution and violence.

Verses 5—8. "And after that I looked, and behold the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony (the inner sanctuary of the temple) in heaven was opened."

"And the seven angels came out of the temple having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever (committed unto each one of these seven angels the portion of the divine displeasure which he was to execute.) And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

The pure white clothing of the seven angels and the golden girdles of their breasts, are emblematic of the impartial justice and the ready obedience with which they execute the divine judgments.

It is a common scriptural figure which speaks of the wrath of God as contained in a vial or cup. In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same, but the dregs thereof all the wicked shall wring out and drink them.

The smoke with which the temple was filled and which prevented all ingress while the seven angels were fulfilling their respective commissions, signifies an extraordinary and glorious manifestation of the divine power and justice in the judgments inflicted. The seven angels having received the seven vials now hear a great voice out of the temple or sanctuary ordering them to execute their respective commissions.

Chap. xvi. 1. "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying, Go your ways and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."

The first angel pours out the contents of his vial upon the earth, (the land) the second angel pours his vial upon the sea, the third upon the rivers and fountains of waters, the fourth upon the sun, the fifth upon the throne or seat of the beast, the sixth upon the great river Euphrates, and the seventh into the air. It has been remarked that the land, the sea, and the rivers and fountains of waters signify three different kinds of population in the Roman world; the land signifies the portion more particularly Roman in their manners and civilization, the rivers and fountains of water signify the favoured nations or communities of foreign manners and civilization, while the sea signifies that portion of the population who less disciplined and stable in their minds and passions constitute the greater number, the mass or multitude.

The rivers and fountains of waters included in the 5th and 6th centuries, those foreign nations who after conquering the Romans settled among them, and united with them in close alliance and friendship. These rivers and fountains must represent in modern times those nations or communities as transmitted in a modified form, and comprehending the different

Roman Catholic nations or communities of Europe. The Greeks for some ages were to the Roman power and idolatry in the west what the river Euphrates was to the city of Babylon, they protected the Latin or Western people from the Mahomedans. In modern times the river Euphrates may represent the Greek community as perpetuated in religion and government among the Russians.

The Russians are of the Greek religion, and their government is the Greek imperial despotism or autocracy.

The Russian empire is the Greek empire perpetuated in Church and State.

The sun is the symbol of the chief source of knowledge and influence. It was in ancient times the province of governments to exercise a chief agency in the diffusion and perpetuation of knowledge, one of the titles of the ancient Egyptian kings was, "Son of the sun."

The seat or throne of the beast, signifies the seat of government — the capitol of the Roman Catholic Church, or the sovereign administration of Roman Catholic power.

The air may represent public opinion, the public mind and sentiment, that upon which authority is dependent for its life and vigor.

The 2d verse. "And the first (angel) went and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." The earth here signifies the land as distinguished from the water, and represents the distinguished portion of the population in the Roman world—the portion who are more particularly Roman in their sentiments and manners. Something will occur among this portion of the population, which will prove very annoying and painful to those who are pledged to the service of the Catholic Church, and who render submission to the fabricated representative of its divinity—who idolize papal authority.

Perhaps this portion of the population will become disaffected

towards Catholic divine authority, and towards its representative papal authority, and this disaffection will grievously afflict the minds and feelings of the votaries of Catholic and papal divinity.

Verse 3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea.

The less stable—the less disciplined population—the multitude, now became imbued with some property or principle as deleterious to the existence of the Roman corporate spirit as a sea of congealed blood would be to animal existence.

Verses 4—7. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art and wast and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. And I heard another voice out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

The foreign nations or communities in favor and alliance with the Romans, now becoming imbued with some property or principle extremely distasteful and obnoxious to the obsequious and bigoted votaries of the papacy and Roman Catholicism, will be instruments of an overruling Providence to inflict upon them a righteous retaliation for their persecution of good men.

Verses 8 and 9. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues, and they repented not to give him glory.

Government, or the supreme authority, will now exercise a severe and hostile influence upon those who practise a false religion, whether professedly Christian or infidel.

Perhaps the intellectual light as well as the moral influence diffused by government, will now be increased to an intense degree, and become intolerant and tormenting to them. But

neither this or the forementioned judgments will bring them to a sense of their error, and to an acknowledgment of the manifest justice of divine Providence in bringing about these untoward events so annoying and torturing to their sentiments and feelings. They will not see in these untoward events of Providence that the hand of God is against them.

Verses 10 and 11. And the fifth angel poured his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

Something befals the administration or seat of Roman Catholic authority, by which that authority will be deprived of all its glory and influence, and Roman Catholics in their adversity will be extremely chagrined and mortified. As partisans and bigots when they find their cause in misfortune and disgrace, are miserably vexed and tormented, but persevere in their error, so will it be with these men. They will disregard all the retributive inflictions of a righteous Providence upon them and their cause, and will continue in their perverse spirit and conduct—hardening their hearts against the calls to repentance and a better mind.

Like Pharaoh, they will persevere in their hardness of heart until some more fearful workings of a retributive Providence overtake them, and involve them and their cause in a complete and fatal ruin.

Verses 12–16. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.

And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." A large army of various nations gathered together by the kings of Medea and Persia and commanded by Legrus besieged Babylon and took the city in the following manner.

The river Euphrates ran through the midst of the city, being about a quarter of a mile broad and twelve feet deep, and having on each side a wall. The width and depth of the river, together with the walls on each side, were thought to be a sure defence against access to the city in that quarter.

The Persian general, however, by means of ditches and canals which he had caused to be dug, and which on a certain night he opened to the river, drew off the water from its usual channel and rendered the river fordable.

The troops then entering the river thus rendered fordable, and coming to the gates of the walls on the river, found that in the neglect and disorder of an annual festival then celebrated, they had been left open, the besieged not suspecting that the city could possibly be entered by the river. The troops thus finding easy access into the heart of the city, penetrated into the very palace and surprising the guards, cut them to pieces along with the king himself. Thus the city was suddenly captured, in the midst of fancied security, and an end put to the dominion of Babylon.

The most of the particulars of this taking of Babylon, were foretold by the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. They both speak of the drying up of the river, not merely as a temporary evil, but one which was to render Babylon desolate forever.

Accordingly the waters drawn off from the channel by Cyrus, were never brought back, but were left to diffuse themselves over the surrounding country and render it desolate and unhealthy. Evil, says Isaiah, shall come upon thee suddenly,

thou shalt not know from whence it cometh. This evil was to come upon Babylon as a punishment for her idolatrous worship and her oppressive treatment of the professed people of God.

The Lord, says Jeremiah, hath raised up the spirit of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple, the violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitants of Zion say. . . . . The days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon. According to the prophet Jeremiah, then, the Lord should come in judgment upon Babylon, he would muster the host to the battle and there would be a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, and the day of the Lord would come upon Babylon as a destruction from the Almighty. When we call to our remembrance that the destruction of Babylon was to be the work of the kings of the east, that the drying up of the river Euphrates proved the means of her sudden capture and ultimate ruin, that her destruction was a judgment of God upon her, for her idolatry and her oppression of the professors of the true religion, that an army, composed of different nations was gathered against her by the kings of the east and witnessed her fall, and that the period of her fall is termed the day of the Lord, the day of her destruction from the Almighty, we are prepared to discover the meaning of the contents of the sixth vial. We are to understand by Babylon, Roman polity, and by the river Euphrates, we may understand the Russians as being Greek in their idolatrous forms of religion, and in their imperial government.

The drying up or drawing off the river so as to leave the city exposed and unprotected, intimates that the population of the Greek religion and institutions will now abandon the idolatrous system of Roman polity continued among them. And this loss of defence and support to the system, will prepare the way for the coming of some combined power to put an utter end to that

polity, in the Latin or western world, and to restore the worship and polity of the Christian church, to purity and prosperity.

With, however, the coming in of the combined power, and before the destruction and desolation of the Roman system of polity and idolatry, there will occur a great controversy concerning the invocation of deceased men and women as demons or mediators. In this controversy, the dragon—the party opposed to Christianity, the beast—the Roman Catholic party, and the false prophets—the Roman church, as the infallible teacher of Christianity, will be united together on one side, who compose the other side will appear in the latter part of the nineteenth chapter.

The unclean spirits of devils (demons) working miracles, which in the form of frogs are seen coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, represent the emissaries which each one of these three parties will send forth to teach the invocation of deceased men and women as mediators.

These teachers are frogs in the sense of babblers. The Greek word in its root signifies, to bawl, to speak loud, to vociferate.

These emissaries, in their manner of teaching, will display more sound than sense, and be noted more for declamation than sound speech. They will endeavour, by vehement declamation, to join to their side of the controversy, men of station and authority, of all professions and opinions in respect to religion.

Verse 16. "And he (they) gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon, (the mountain of destruction.)"

It was by the waters of Megiddo that the kings of Canaan fought a battle with the Israelites under Deborah and Barak. In this battle, the Canaanites were so signally defeated that the commander-in-chief was obliged to flee away alone and on foot.

These babblers will unite the men of station and authority with the assumption of some proposition—some position in argument of a weak and indefeasible nature, where their defeat will

be sudden and decisive. The suddenness of this defeat is expressed in the fifteenth verse. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

The end of the controversy is not a part of the sixth vial but of the seventh, and is therefore related in a subsequent (the latter part of the nineteenth) chapter.

Verse 17. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done."

The retributions of divine providence on Roman idolatry and power, will be completed under this vial. This last portion of retribution will begin in the air, or public mind, and reach to changes among the population in their political positions. The public mind will become roused into indignation and anger, and there will follow some great revolution, changing the positions of the different portions of the population in respect to rank and influence.

Verse 18. "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."

In this great political revolution, the various idolatrous polities, including that of Rome, will share in one common ruin.

Verse 19. "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Jerusalem, when it was besieged by Titus, was divided into three parts, and among three parties, and these parties at war with each other; and it was this civil war that brought about the capture and destruction of the city.

The destruction of Roman polity will be brought about by party division among its adherents.

Verse 20. "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found."

The different portions of the population will be reduced into one common level in point of rank or eminence.

Verse 21. "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

Some additional heavy calamity will overtake the votaries of a false and idolatrous worship, who, in their daring and perverse impiety, will not acknowledge their calamity to be the result of a righteous retributive providence.

Like the ancient Jews, they will persevere to the very last in defaming the revealed truth of God in its obvious and legitimate sense. And what our Lord said of the Jews will apply to them. "The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

DISCOURSE XIII.

Rev. xvii.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, [the abyss, or deep,] and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are [and are] seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, [is an eighth king al. ne,] and is of the seven and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Some parts of the contents of the sixth and seventh vials having been described in a partial manner, are now described more at length, in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth

chapters. The seventeenth and eighteenth chapters give a particular account of the fall and punishment of Babylon, while the latter part of the nineteenth chapter gives an account of the great battle, which results in taking the beast and the false prophet prisoners, and casting them alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

The beginning of this seventeenth chapter informs us that one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, came and talked with the Apostle, saying unto him, "Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

Here the City of Rome in its corporate character, under the name Babylon, is personified by an unchaste woman, with whom the ruling powers have had idolatrous connection, and of whose existing idolatrous spirit or sentiment the people have drank, until it has infused into them a kind of idolatrous mania.

The woman sits upon many waters, to signify that the authority and rule of this city corporation extend over people of different communities and languages. The angel having merely spoken of the woman to the Apostle, now proceeds to conduct him to the wilderness that the Apostle might see her. Accordingly he sees her there sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

The scene is in the wilderness, because it is to the woman and the beast, upon which she sits, in their wilderness or desolate state, that the attention of the Apostle is now called. The twelve hundred and sixty years of their prevailing power and influence, have passed away, and are followed by the period of their decline and fall.

The beast with seven heads and ten horns, is particularly described in the thirteenth chapter, and we have here, the additional information, that in his declining state, he is scarlet coloured. The scarlet colour, is sometimes symbolic of high

affluent condition, but it is also emblematic of crime, cruelty, injustice, oppression. It is here, no doubt, symbolic of the latter sense. The oppressive rule of this body of men towards protestants, in ages past, is as flagrant as scarlet. It has also greatly blasphemed sacred titles and divine authority, by abusing them to forbidden and idolatrous purposes, and teaching for divine truths and precepts, the fabrications and fictions of false men. The woman sitting upon (riding) this scarlet coloured beast, personifies Rome ruling this great body of men.

The 4th verse. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication."

The purple and scarlet, and gold, and precious stones, and pearls, with which the woman is clothed, represent the various external arts which Rome uses, to enchant the senses and the imagination in favour of her idolatry. And she presents her idolatrous doctrine to her votaries in a golden cup, that is, in a manner and style of an enticing nature.

5th verse. "And upon her forehead was a name written, mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth."

This inscription on her forehead, signifies, that she now makes no secret of her character, as the mother city of idolatry among Christians, and as in a mysticate or hidden sense, Babylon, the great founder and promoter of the worship of mediators and images.

That the woman should thus glory in her shame, corresponds with what is declared of her in the next verse, that she was drunk—that she had indulged to intoxication the spirit of vindictiveness, against Christians of a pure faith and worship.

Verse 6. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw, I wondered with great admiration."

The open glorying of the woman in her lewdness—the

drunken state in which she is seen, and the cause of that drunkenness, greatly excited the wonder and curiosity of the Apostle.

It is indeed wonderful—paradoxical—that Rome, receiving the scriptures as inspired records, should openly glory in the part which she has taken, in nurturing Christians in idolatry, so evidently condemned and forbidden by those scriptures, and that she should persecute and punish to an insane excess, those who practise and contend for that pure worship and faith which these scriptures so clearly and positively inculcate.

It is indeed strange, that a city so barefaced in her idolatry—a city which has persecuted the followers of a pure Christianity with such exceeding madness, should be the professed and acknowledged capital city of the Christian world.

Verses 7 and 8. "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore, didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast which thou sawest, was, and is not, and yet is," (or is yet to be.)

This beast represents the Latin catholic body, as distinct from the Greek catholic body.

In the time of St. John, or at the close of the first century, the Roman empire had become a corporation of two distinct kinds or characters of people—Latins and Greeks. It was no longer an empire or corporation purely Latin in civilization and power—but was a combination or modification of two elements, Latin and Greek. And in this respect, it might be said of it, in the age of St. John, that it was, and is not. Upon the death of Theodosius, at the close of the fourth century, the empire was divided into two distinct bodies, corporate and politic—the one Latin—the other Greek—the one retaining the Latin language as the language of law and government, and the other, in the course of a short time, resuming the language of the people, which was the Greek. And now, after this division, we find again, a corporation distinctly Latin or western. And

the beast, that in the time of St. John, had been, and was not, is now again.

About eighty years after the separation of the two elements, the Latin corporation, as we before have remarked, was wounded in its imperial head, and lost its great importance, and had its existence among a rude and turbulent population, who, in symbolic language, are represented by the sea. The beast comes up out of the sea with a wounded head. The Latin corporation comes into importance from amidst the rude turbulent population of the west, and with the imperial power apparently abolished. The deadly wound of the beast was healed when Charlemagne assumed the imperial office and power at the close of the eighth century. This restoration of Latin imperial power, led those Romans, who had fallen into an idolatrous form of Christianity, to regard the constitution of the Latin corporation, as one of admirable vigor and strength. "They shall wonder or admire, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

The Roman corporation, in the age of the Apostle, was not, in some respects, a Latin or western corporation, and yet it was the same, continued in a modified character. The words "yet is," may, in the original, however, signify, is yet, is future, is yet to come.

In the sense of either present, or future, the words may apply to the great modern Latin corporation. In the age of St. John, it might be said of the Roman corporation, that in its Latin or western independent character, it was not, but had been, and was to exist again in a future age. The seven heads, are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. Rome was built upon seven hills, and was called the seven-hilled city. The seven heads, however, besides representing these seven hills, also represent seven different kinds or forms of sovereign power, that one after another held the place of supremacy.

Verse 10. "And there are (or rather, And are,) seven kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."

Livy, the Roman historian, names the first five, in the following order: first kings, afterwards consuls, then dictators, then decemvirs, then consular tribunes. The imperial form, which existed in the time of St. John, was the sixth kind of sovereign power.

That which was then not yet come, and which when it did come was to continue for a short space, and then give place to the Latin beast, was the new form of government instituted by Dioclesian, and perfected by Constantine and his successors. This new form retained the same name of imperial but differed from it in being an undisguised autocracy. Like Augustus (we are using the language of Gibbon) Dioclesian may be considered as the founder of a new empire. He framed a new system of imperial government which was afterwards completed by the family of Constantine. And as the image of the old constitution was religiously preserved in the senate, he resolved to deprive that order of its small remains of power and consideration. Under Dioclesian and his successors the senate of Rome lost all connection with the imperial court and the actual government, and Rome ceased to be the capitol of the empire. "When the Roman princes had lost sight of the senate and of "their ancient capitol they forgot the organ and nature of their "legal power. The civil offices of consul, of pro-consul, of cen- "sor and of tribune by the union of which it had been formed, "betrayed to the people its republican extraction. These "modest titles were laid aside;" and if they still distinguished their high station by the appellation of emperor or imperator, that word was understood in a new and more dignified sense, and no longer denoted the general of the Roman armies but the sovereign of the Roman world. If the successors of Dioclesian still declined the title of king, it seems to have been the effect not so much of their moderation as of delicacy. Wherever the Latin tongue was in use, and it was the language of government throughout the empire, the imperial title as it was peculiar to themselves, conveyed a more respectable idea than the name of

king, which they must have shared with a hundred barbarian chieftains; or which at best they could derive only from Romulus or Tarquin. Even the attributes or at least the titles of the divinity were usurped by Dioclesian and Maxentius, who transmitted them to a succession of Christian emperors."

Dioclesian also assumed the diadem and introduced into the court the magnificence and ceremonial of the court of Persia.

"The aim of Augustus in the form of government which he introduced was to disguise the unbounded power which the emperors possessed over the Roman world, while in the new system it was the object to display that power. Ostentation was the first principle of the new system, and the second was division. He divided the empire, the provinces, and every branch of the civil as well as military administration." The historian speaks of these innovations as constituting a new frame of policy, a new form of civil and military administration, a new system of imperial government, a new empire. (Gibbon, Chap. 13, in different places.)

This new form of government, this new kind of Roman sovereigns continued for a short space, a period of about ninety years, when in the year 395 the Roman empire was finally and permanently divided into the two distinct corporations of the Latin or Western, and the Greek or Eastern. And now we find the Latin corporation in its second independent existence, and with a sovereign form of power, which being the seventh continued with some modification may be called an eighth. The seventh form—the imperial autocratic began now in the west to be associated in a peculiar relation with certain cotemporaneous sovereign powers, and in this respect was a somewhat different form of power from that which was constituted by Dioclesian and Constantine, and which has been continued through a succession of Greek and Russian sovereigns down to the present day.

The 11th verse. "And the beast that was and is not, even

he (the king) is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

The supreme sovereign power is destined in this eighth or new imperial autocratic form to have its last form, and in this last form to go into perdition. This eighth or new seventh form hath been transmitted from Honorius through Charlemagne, and a succession of modern, western or Latin emperors.

In the time of Bonaparte, the imperial form of government was peculiar both to France and to Austria. But after the fall of Bonaparte, Western or Latin Europe had but the emperor of Austria. The present ruler of France has been acting over the part of Pepin and Charlemagne towards Rome and its popes, and for the purpose of obtaining papal aid and sanction to the assumption of the imperial title and power.

12th verse. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which (in the time of St. John) have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings, one hour with the beast."

Ten different sovereign powers established themselves on the ruins of the western or Latin empire. These ten sovereign powers, according to Machiavel, were, first, the Ostrogoths, in Moesia; second, the Visigoths, in Pavonia; third, the Sueves and Alans, in Gascoigne and Spain; fourth, the Vandals, in Africa; fifth, the Franks, in France; sixth, the Burgundians, in Burgundy; seventh, the Heruli and Turingi, in Italy; eighth, the Saxon and Angles, in Britain; ninth, the Huns, in Hungary; tenth, the Lombards, first upon the Danube and afterwards in Italy.

These sovereign powers were at first but ten, but afterwards their number varied, being sometimes more and sometimes less than ten. They are cotemporaneous, not successive sovereigns. Their power as kings is one hour with the beast—is during one and the same period of time. They are cotemporaneous with the eighth supreme sovereign and with each other.

The 13th verse. "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." These different European powers will be unanimous in lending their authority and aid to the Latin corporation, (Roman Catholic.)

The 14th verse. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords and king of kings, and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful. The war of these kings with the Lamb has been noticed in the pouring out of the sixth vial, and is noticed here again; but the victory of the Lamb in this war is described in the nineteenth chapter.

15th. And he (the angel) saith unto me, the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. They represent the millions of people under the rule and influence of the corporation of Rome. Two hundred millions of professed Christians acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the Roman corporation.

The 16th verse. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

Burning was the punishment of a priest's daughter who had violated the law of chastity. And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father, she shall be burnt with fire. Rome, as a Christian Church, hath by her idolatrous practices profaned, scandalized the apostolic ministry, by whom she was begotten. She has wrought folly in the Christian Israel, and dishonoured her apostolic parentage.

The different European powers who are now in union with the Catholic corporation will eventually come to dislike Rome, and (make her desolate and naked) deprive her of her rule and influence, (and eat her flesh;) consume her revenues—appropriate them to their own use—(and burn her with) fire, torment her with penal afflictions.

17th verse. For God hath put into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God are fulfilled.

God will allow them to fulfil his purpose—and to fulfil one purpose, and to give their sovereign authority to the Latin Catholic corporation or Church, until what God has foretold concerning their withdrawal from that corporation has been fulfilled. When the purpose of divine providence is fulfilled the different sovereign Roman Catholic powers will separate from the great corporation with which they are now in communion, and will become severe in their penal inflictions upon Rome itself as a body corporate and politic.

The 18th verse. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city—which reigneth over the kings of the earth—is that great city or corporation of Rome, which, in the age of the apostle, was the capital of the Roman world, and was at the head of all rule and authority.

DISCOURSE XIV.

Rev. xviii.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What

great *city* is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be* shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth: for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

In the preceding chapter Rome is spoken of in her character as a body corporate and politic, sustained by another great body corporate and politic. In this present chapter Rome is the subject of prediction in reference more particularly to her polity.

In this chapter, three voices in succession speak in symbolic language of the fall and ruin of the polity of Rome. The first voice is that of an angel having great power and coming down from heaven clothed in a dazzling light. The second voice is a voice from heaven, and the third voice is that of a mighty angel who speaks by actions as well as words.

The first angel cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen—is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, (demons) and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. This angel, under the mystical name of Babylon, pronounces the fall and ruin of Rome in her system of polity, and gives the reason of her fall and ruin. The woman Babylon, represents Rome as a body corporate and politic, while

the city, Babylon, represents Rome as a polity, the word polity being derived from a Greek word which means city.

The inhabitants of the city—those subjects or citizens of Roman polity in its fallen and ruined condition, will consist of men of perverse mind and corrupt and hateful manners. It will become a refuge for men of such character. Its fall and ruin are declared to be in retribution to its pernicious influence upon the nations and rulers and merchants of the earth.

The nations or people had imbibed the idolatrous spirit of Rome, a spirit which inspired them with a kind of idolatrous rage or mania, the rulers had formed idolatrous connections with her and the merchants, the divines, the religious teachers and ministers, the clergy, had become great and powerful through the numerous offices and means of authority and influence, in which she abounded.

In the forty-seventh chapter of Isaiah, in which the prophet fortells the fall and ruin of ancient Babylon, he applies the name of merchants to her enchanters, her sorcerers, her diviners, her false prophets, her teachers, who falsely professed to understand and reveal the will and counsels of heaven.

The first voice having concluded, the apostle hears another voice from heaven calling upon the people of God to come out of the doomed city and to aid in her punishment.

Verses 4–9. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her my people, that be ye not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works. In the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her, for she saith in her heart, 'I am a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.' Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Our Lord had forewarned the Christian Jews that when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by Roman armies, they should be looking for its speedy capture and destruction, and that they should make their escape as soon as possible.

Jerome informs us that the Christian Jews who believed in Christ's predictions, left the city before its final siege under Titus, and removed to a neighbouring town called Pella, and so escaped the miseries that followed. In accordance with this portion of Christian history, the voice from heaven calls upon Christian people to sever themselves from all participation in the Roman system of polity, to abandon it wholly, to give it no countenance, to have no communion with it, lest partaking of its sins, they should also partake of its punishment. To urge them to such withdrawal and removal from Rome, they are assured that the sons of the Roman system of polity were like mountains piled upon mountains reaching to the sky and drawing upon it the notice and punishment of heaven. All Christian people are therefore enjoined to turn against it, and assist in destroying it.

The worst corporations may have some upright individuals belonging to them, but when the corporation is near its end, all sincere Christians will renounce its polity and leave it in its fate, just as all Christian Jews abandoned Jerusalem at its final siege by the Romans and would take no part in its defence.

The people of God are required not only to withdraw from Rome, but to punish her as she had punished them; that is they are to urge the ruin of Rome, not in her individual members or in her wealth and buildings, but in her system of idolatrous worship and polity. The ruin of Rome in this sense is also to come upon her in the midst of fancied security, even while she is glorying in the enduring, eternal nature of her power; and boasting that she is not without powerful protectors, among the governments of the earth; that she is not like a widow; an unprotected corporation. Her woes will come together within the compass of a short time, and there will be an entire end or

consumption of her power and glory, she shall be utterly burned with fire.

The voice from heaven next proceeds to describe how the kings and merchants of the earth and those who have to do with the sea will lament, and how the people of God will rejoice when they behold the smoke of the burning city.

The sovereigns or rulers who were partners with Rome in her idolatrous doings, are filled with consternation in contemplating the ruin of the most powerful and enduring polity that had ever existed. Its ruin will be the result of a course of providence, so evidently beyond their control that they will stand aloof, and render her no assistance; knowing that such assistance would be in vain, and would only involve them in the same ruin. A city polity that under various changes has for thousands of years been regarded as the reigning polity of the Roman world, will in its ruin naturally draw forth from its admirers, and adherents, expressions, feelings of sorrow and regret. And similar feelings and expressions will be elicited from the merchants of the earth; the divines and clergy in communion with Rome.

Verses 7–11. "And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandize any more. The merchandize of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls and fine linen, and purple and silk, and scarlet and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep and horses, and chariots and slaves (bodies,) and souls of men."

"And the fruits that thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all."

"The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And saying Alas, Alas! that great city that was

clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls. For in one hour so great riches is come to naught."

These various articles of merchandize represent those multiplied precious means of influence, in which this polity abounds. Those means comprehend matters of doctrine, discipline and worship. Those of the clergy rich in these means become great and honourable.

The dealers in these multiplied valuable means of influence will now find their business at an end, and like the civil rulers they will witness with grief the consumption and ruin of this once mighty polity, and be astonished that it could be consumed and ruined, and all the means of influence destroyed in so short a time. "In one hour so great riches is come to naught."

Verses 17–20. "And every ship master, and all the company in ships and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning saying, 'What city is like unto this great city.' And they cast dust on their heads and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, Alas! that great city wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness; for in one hour is she made desolate."

All those different persons whose business is with the sea represent the clergy who have to do with the great mass of the population, the less refined and submissive population comprehending various nations and languages. The great emporium of their means of greatness has been consumed; all those means have vanished in a moment, their business and greatness are now at an end.

The voice from heaven concludes in the 20th verse, with the following language. "Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

The Roman polity in its ruin will receive no sympathy from the faithful teacher and ministers of Christ, and the persecu-

tions and penal inflictions with which it pursued them, will be avenged in the completeness and severity of its ruin.

After the angel from heaven, and the voice from heaven had concluded what each had to say, a third angel responds to them by a striking action accompanied with corresponding words.

Verses, 21–24. "And a mighty (strong) angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all, and the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsmen of whatever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill stone shall be heard no more at all in thee.

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom, and of the bride, shall be heard no more at all in thee; for the merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

The 50th and 51st chapters of the book of Jeremiah, consist, of predictions concerning the fall of ancient Babylon. They were written during the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and the manuscript was given to Seraiah, a Jewish prince, who was going to Babylon on some business of King Zedekiah, in order that he might read it to the captive Jews there, and encourage them with the assurance that after the seventieth year of their captivity, their captors would be conquered by the kings of the east, of Media and Persia, and be deprived of all power over the Jews. So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah. When thou comest to Babylon and shalt see and read all these words. Then shalt thou say, O Lord, Thou hast spoken against this place to cut it off, that

none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate for ever.

And it shall be when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it and cast it into the midst of Euphrates. And thou shalt say, thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.

This action of Seraiah was both a sign and an assurance of the fall of this tyrannical city from its power and influence. And the similar action and language of the angel were intended to assure Christians that the city of Rome in her system of polity is destined not only to fall from her supremacy, but to sink into the lowest degradation and contempt, so that she will no more be found among politics, and no more give any indications of activity and prosperity. This angel also confirms what the preceding angel declared concerning the reason of the fall and ruin of Roman polity, that it had deceived all nations by its pious frauds in teaching and ruling, by its false doctrines and unfounded authority, that by these means its merchants, its teachers and divines became great and powerful, and that under its administration and rule faithful teachers and good men have been persecuted unto death. Rome as the ruling polity in the Roman world is spoken of as accountable for the wrong done to those who have capitally suffered for a pure Christianity in the Roman world.

Pagan Rome established the precedent of punishing those who would not participate in her idolatrous worship. And Christian Rome greatly improved on the precedent. How cruel and unjust have been their conduct in the pains and penalties which they have inflicted upon men for teaching and practising a pure Christianity. Such conduct is not merely incidental, but it is constitutional in her system of polity.

Thus Rome in retribution upon its pious frauds, its bewitching idolatry, and its penal inflictions on good men, is destined in the course of Divine Providence to be utterly ruined, and to

become utterly desolate as a corporate or living polity. And this event will be a subject of great rejoicing and praise among the servants of God, as we learn in the beginning of the next chapter.

Rev. xix. 1–10. "And after these things, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God. For true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia, And her smoke arose up for ever and ever.

"And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia.

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

"And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of propheey."

After the burning up of the city, and its reduction into a

smoking ruin, four different voices in heaven one after another, exclaim, Alleluia, which is a word of Hebrew derivation, and means, Praise ye Jah. (Jehovah).

The first voice was a great voice of much people in heaven, who speak of the retribution inflicted upon Rome, (her system of polity), as an event for which the great ruler of the world ought to be praised and honoured, assuring us that in her polity Rome is to remain in an eternal state of desolation—remain for ever a heap of smoking ruins, and serve as a fearful monument of the righteous Providence to all future ages.

The voice of the much people in heaven who loudly demand praise to Jehovah, is responded to by the twenty-four elders and the four living ones, saying, Amen, (Yea, Verily) Praise ye Jehovah. And now a third voice comes out of the very throne, the seat of divine judgment and authority, in confirmative response, calling upon all who serve and fear God to praise Jehovah. And then another voice as that of an immense multitude comes out in the loudest confirmative response, to praise God; declaring that the joyful period of the reign of the Omnipotent and of the marriage of the Lamb had come.

According to the prophet Daniel as well as St. John, after the judgment shall sit and take away the dominion of Rome, to consume and destroy it unto the end, the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

This glorious period of the kingdom of the Most High, or reign of the Omnipotent, will be introduced with a joyful event, the marriage of the Lamb to his wife, the Church.

The figure of a marriage is applied to the Church of God, under the old dispensation, and is applied to the Church of God at different periods under the new dispensation.

In the parable of the king who made a marriage for his son, as related in the 22d chapter of Matthew, the marriage supper

takes place after the destruction of Jerusalem. After the invitation to the gospel supper had been preached for some years, and was rejected by the majority of the Jews, the king was wroth, and he sent forth his armies and destroyed these murderers and burnt up their city. Then saith he to his servants, to his ministers, the wedding is ready—the time for the solemnization of the marriage and for the accompanying festivity, is come—the time for a new and more privileged and joyful state of the Church has arrived, and as the Jewish nation is not worthy of this state, go among the nations or Gentiles and bid them to come into the Christian Church and participate in the blessings and privileges of the gospel dispensation.

The old dispensation virtually ended in the death of Christ, but it did not actually come to an end in its national character until the destruction of Jerusalem and the abolition of the temple worship. And so the new dispensation commenced upon the death and resurrection of Christ, but not in full force and power until after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Hence this destruction is called in Scripture the coming of Christ or Christianity, that is the coming of Christianity in general power and influence among the nations of the earth—among the Gentiles.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in all its preceding and accompanying circumstances, accorded so exactly with the predictions of Christ and his Apostles, that it had a powerful influence in persuading men of the truth of Christianity, and prepared the way for its reception by the Gentiles. While at the same time it deprived the Jews of all power to oppress and persecute the teachers and professors of Christianity, and brought great glory and honor to the gospel as a miraculous revelation, and taught those who reject this revelation, to expect a fearful retribution. Now the ruin of Rome in her corporate politic character will bring great deliverance and salvation to the faithful teachers and professors of a pure Christianity, and will with powerful effect convince the world of the

miraculous knowledge communicated by the Christian revelation, and so prepare the minds of men for its coming in universal and millenial influence and glory. This utter ruin of Rome in her corporate—politic character, will more signally display the miraculous foreknowledge and predictions of the gospel, and the equity and righteousness of divine Providence, and produce more glorious results than the abolition of the Jewish polity and worship.

And if the figurative language of a marriage have been applied to the Christian Church after the ruin of Jewish polity and worship, it is with increased propriety applied to the Christian Church after the predicted ruin of Roman polity and worship.

The marriage of the Lamb is come, and her wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in linen clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. The Christian Church in her millenial married state will be a body of people who practise virtue and piety —and the rectitude of their conduct will make the body appear pure and illustrious in the eyes of the public. This righteousness of her people will far exceed that of the people of the Roman polity. And the Christian Church becoming a corporation of faithful men, honouring their profession by a correct and consistent practice, will be brought into an enduring state of cheerful obedience to Christ, and of affectionate confidence in Him.

The Church in her corporate politic character, and Christ in his doctrine and discipline and worship, will come in the millenium, be united together in a most close and affectionate relation.

When the angel who had been showing these prophecies to the apostle and explaining the sense of them, had come to this glorious and joyful period and state of the Christian body, corporate and politic, and declared that whereto he had revealed concerning these future joyful events were true words of God, the apostle was so delighted with the declaration, and at the

same time so struck with the extraordinary knowledge evinced by the angel in explaining the sense of these prophetic symbolic visions, that he fell down at his feet to worship him, but the angel forbade him, for the reason that the apostle in the testimony—the teaching of Christ equal to him (the angel) and possessed the spirit — the sense — the substance — the living realty contained in the symbols and images of prophecy, that he, the angel, was but the fellow servant of the apostle, and was no more worthy of worship than the apostle himself, and that if the apostle wished to show his admiration of supernatural knowledge by worship, he must render that worship to God.

DISCOURSE XV.

Rev. xix. 11–21.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven, followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it, he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written—King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together, unto the supper of the great God, That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together, to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Having described the end of Babylon, or Rome, as a corporation and a polity, this prophecy goes on to describe certain attending events, such as the fighting of the great battle, spoken of under the sixth vial, and its issue in the capture of the beast and of the false prophet, and the slaughter of the kings of the earth and their armies.

We found under the sixth vial, the beast, the false prophet, and the dragon, sending forth their emissaries, to gather together the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, into Armageddon, to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. As the fighting and issue of the battle did not come within the

period of the sixth vial, but ran into that of the seventh, an account of them was deferred to the present chapter.

In the period of the sixth vial, Babylon is left exposed by the drying up of the river Euphrates, which flowed through the midst of it, but its conflagration and destruction are to occur in the period of the seventh vial.

The river Euphrates was dried up to make way for some combined powers, who were to capture the city, and put an end to its rule and power, and to give protection and freedom to the true religion. The issue of the great battle, is impliedly the immediate forerunner of the ruin of Babylon in its power and authority. In the contests of the seventh vial, we have found that Babylon, immediately before its ruin, will, like Jerusalem, be divided into three parties, all hostile to each other, and only united in contending against one common enemy. Perhaps, we are to understand these three parties to be—the party of the dragon, (the infidel party)—the party of the beast, (the Roman catholic party)—and the party of the false prophets, (the Roman party.)

They will, in a certain degree be opposed to each other, but they will unite in inculcating certain erroneous principles, by means of their emissaries, for the purpose of bringing to the aid and defence of Roman polity, all the different rulers and governments yet favorably disposed towards Rome.

The erroneous principles—the erroneous emissaries or teachers sent forth from these three parties respectively, have to do with devils or demons—that is, beings supposed to be invested with certain middle and mediating power and authority between the court of heaven and men living on the earth.

The battle, will be a battle of opinion. It will be a contest of mind—a great controversy concerning the invocation and honouring of angels, and of deceased men and women, as intercessors and mediators in the court of heaven.

In this controversy, the Roman party, the Roman catholic party, and the infidel party, however disaffected towards each

other, will unite on one side of this controversy, and deny, that Christ is to be invoked and honoured as the sole mediator to the exclusion of all angels or deceased persons.

If Rome, in its false character as a divine infallible teacher of revealed truth—as the seat of infallible teaching takes the lead on one side of this controversy—Christ, as a prophet or teacher, faithful and true—that is, Christ in his teaching or word, as delivered to us in holy scripture, takes the lead on the other side.

Verse 11. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him, was called Faithful and True; in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

The white horse is symbolic of a controversy waged, and a victory won, in accordance with truth and equity. The rider of the white horse, the leader in this controversy, is called faithful and true, because he is the Amen—the faithful and true witness—the infallible teacher of divine truth, and divine law. In declaring to mankind, the truth and will of heaven, he faithfully declared them as he had received them in heaven from his Father.

He did not make use of his office as a divine teacher and witness, to impose on the world his own fabrications as divine law and truth.

"The Father gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." Our Lord, too, in his various contests of argument with his opposers, always reasoned fairly and justly—he made use of no guile or sophistry—or appeals to ignorance, prejudice and passion.

Verse 12. "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written which no man knew but he himself."

His eyes of fire denote his acute perception—his intellectual power to penetrate every dark corner of error, and to detect the most hidden sophistry, so that no mask or fair speech could con-

ceal from him the guile and subtlety of his opposers. Such a piercing understanding did he manifest in his words and answers when questioned by his opposers, that they at length ceased to contend with him in argument. The crowns on his head are significant of the victories which he has gained for the truth by his word as delivered to us in the sacred records, and the victories which he is yet to gain before the reign of truth as he taught it becomes universal.

His written name which no man knew (could read and understand) but he himself, is significant of some mysterious truth in his person, which no man can solve and understand but he himself.

Great indeed is the mystery of our religion in the doctrine of God manifest in the flesh.

Verse 13. "And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God."

The vesture as dipped in blood, is significant of the intellectual execution which he will make among his opposers. The name by which he is designated to us in scripture, or his called name, is God—the Word—by whom all things were made. He was God speaking to men. What he spake was the speech or word of God.

We conceive that in these several figures we have Christianity in its teaching of truth, represented as true, searching, and superior to all opposition.

Verse 14. "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

These armies are the faithful advocates of the truth as it is in Christ, and they, like their leader, use only just and fair means in contending for Christian truth. In this controversy, they contend for the truth as Christ spake and taught it, and as it is delivered in holy scripture.

Verse 15. "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them

with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

The sword proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, is his speech or word as recorded by the sacred writers. With this word he will smite the nations—the Gentiles—the idolaters—he will administer cutting reproof to those who practise an idolatrous worship. The rod of iron signifies that the rule or influence of the Gospel will be severe upon idolaters; and the treading of the wine-press of the fierceness of Divine wrath, represents the extreme severity of the influence and action of Christian truth upon the vicious and wicked. The Gospel faithfully taught will now be victorious, in putting an end to the power and influence of idolaters and evil doers.

16th verse. "And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

No kings or governments have any divine authority above the power and law of Christ, and the power and law of Christ are destined to go on in a career of victory over the passions and prejudices and corrupt nature of mankind, until their reign becomes universal, and all rulers and states come under the mild and heavenly influence of the gospel, and acknowledge the supremacy of its teaching and authority. Christianity has already effected by its silent influence, a benign change in laws and governments, and moderated the ferocity of war and of despotic power, and it will continue its ameliorating influence until the nations shall give up the study of war, and governments cease to oppress and tyrannize over mankind. According to the word or gospel of Christ, as delivered to us in the sacred records, there is but one one man in heaven whom we may honour and invoke as our Mediator there, and that man is Christ Jesus.

This Mediator being God as well as man, is omniscient and omnipresent, and can hear our prayers and invocations, as no angel or canonized saint can hear them, and if we insist that they can hear our invocations, and that Christ needs their mediation and intercession to urge on his own mediation and inter

cession, we are doing him great wrong and contradicting his word. In this sole right of Christ to exclusive invocation, as a Mediator in heaven, all his followers and advocates in the coming great controversy, will sustain him by all those fair and sound arguments, with which Scripture, rightly understood, furnish them. As the important right of Christ to exclusive invocation as a Mediator in heaven, is the subject of contention, we can perceive how properly Christ, in his word or teaching, is made to occupy such a conspicuous station, and take such a conspicuous part, in this great controversy.

Verses 17 and 18. "And I saw an angel standing in the sun! and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, both small and great."

These words intimate, that the different powers and rulers from the sovereign down, will now cease to favour or sustain an idolatrous Christianity, by the aid of their authority and means.

Verses 19, 20. "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together, to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

They who compose the two parties, represented by the beast and the false prophet, will, in the course of this controversy, commit themselves to some false proposition, assume some untenable position, where they will find themselves caught by the word of God, in their error and wickedness.

But though thus caught, they will not be brought to repent-

ance, but being left to continue in their error and wickedness, will be delivered over to a reprobate state.

Verse 21. "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth and the fowls were filled with their flesh."

The remnant, the kings of the earth and their armies, the different powers and rulers will be slain in the sense that they will cease to aid an idolatrous, and oppose a pure Christianity. And the event will be the effect of the powerful handling of the word of God.

This controversy will issue in making manifest, that Rome, as the pretended seat of infallible Christian teaching, and the Roman Catholic church, who follow its teaching, have egregiously imposed upon the world in teaching the invocation of angels and deceased Christians, as mediators in the court of heaven, and that their claims to infallibility in transmitting and teaching the truth of Christ on this subject, have been without any foundation. The present Pope, Pius the ninth, has issued an encyclical letter to all patriarchs, primates, arch-bishops and bishops, from which we may perceive the teaching and practice of Rome on this subject.

As a remedy for the evil of the times, the pope invites these high dignitaries to unite in earnest prayer to God, and that they may be successful in their application to him for clemency, he prescribes the following mode of approaching him.

"And that God may be made more accessible and give ear "to our prayers, and hear our petitions, let us raise our hearts "and hands to his most holy mother, the immaculate Virgin "Mary. We could not find protection more powerful or more "effectual with God. She is the most tender of mothers, our "firmest reliance, and the very spring of our hope, since she "asks nothing which she does not obtain, and her prayer is "never refused."

"Let us also implore, in the first place, the intercession of "the Prince of the Apostles, to whom Jesus Christ has given

" the keys of the kingdom of heaven, whom he has established " as the foundation stone of his church, against which the gates " of hell will never be able to prevail. Let us then pray to the " companion of his apostleship. Let us then pray to the patron " of each city and country, and to all the blessed that our mer- " ciful Lord may shed upon us, in abundance and munificence, " the gifts of his bounty.

To recapitulate, it appears that before the utter decline and fall of Rome, the Russian, or some other nation, will withdraw their influence and favour, from the system of Roman polity; that this withdrawal, will prepare the way for the interposition of some combined powers to put an end to Roman rule and polity, and give liberty and protection to true Christianity; that this withdrawal will also be followed with a general, extraordinary controversy, on the subject of mediator invocation, in which the three great bodies or parties of deceivers will take one side, while Christ, in his word and teaching, as transmitted in Holy Scripture, will take the lead on the other side, and in the course of the controversy, the deceivers, represented by the beast and the false prophet, will be caught and exposed in their error, and after this exposure, delivered over to a reprobate mind and state. With the fall of Rome in its teaching character, will follow the ruin of its system of polity, and a great and glorious change in Christianity, as a body corporate and politic —as the city, the church of God. The Christian church will then become a corporation, of a fair and upright reputation for virtue and truth, and enter into a new state of cordial confidence in the teaching and affectionate submission to the authority of Christianity. This state is that millenium of blessedness, to which our attention is called in the next chapter.

DISCOURSE XVI.

Rev. xx.

The last time that the apostle had in vision seen the dragon, was on the eve of the great battle with the word of God.

The dragon, by his emissaries, had assisted in gathering together to this battle, the kings of the earth and of the whole world.

In this battle, the beast and the false prophet were captured, and after their capture they were cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, but we are not informed what became of the dragon after the battle, until the beginning of this twentieth chapter.

Chap. xx. 1–3. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit (the abyss or deep) and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit (abyss or deep) and shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season."

The dragon represents as a body or combination or society, those men who deceive mankind by calumniating and contradicting Christianity, by speaking falsely of it, and denying the truth of its assertions and revelations.

The serpent in Eden in this manner, deceived our first mother Eve. Hence, the dragon or this body of unbelievers is termed that old serpent, the devil (the calumniator or liar) and Satan, (the contradictor or opposer of truth) who deceives the nations, who deceives the whole world. The abyss or deep cavity here

represents the obscure, degraded, barbarous portion of mankind who have to be kept under rigorous restraint.

The capture of the dragon, the binding him with a great chain, the casting him into some deep cavity under the earth, the closing up the entrance and sealing a seal upon the closed entrance, are significant of the low, degraded condition in which the calumniators and opposers of Christianity who deceive men into infidelity and false religion, will now, as a body, be found to exist. These deceivers will now be confined in their power and influence, to the lowest of mankind, without the possibility of escaping into consideration. They will now have no power to entice the orderly portion of mankind into the disregard of divinely revealed truth and duty, by slandering and contradicting Christianity.

Verses 4–6. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls (persons) of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

We have before, been informed of a glorious period awaiting Christianity, as a church or body corporate and politic, but here we are informed of its millenial glorious condition, as a faith, a doctrine, a matter of testimony and belief.

The apostle sees alive again the Christian martyrs, who sealed their faith and testimony with their blood. He sees also, alive, those Protestant Christians, who, with all the world against them, would not submit to Roman Catholic authority, or its image or representative the pope, nor pledge their minds or

energies to the service and interests of the Roman Catholic church. All those protestants who have adhered to a pure gospel under Roman Catholic power and dominion, as well as all who have lost their lives for the sake of true religion, will live again in the same sense in which Elijah lived again in the person of John the Baptist; they will be raised from the dead in a similar sense to that in which the Jews were raised from the dead, when, after the expiration of their period of captivity in Babylon, they were restored as a nation, to political and religious life.

That remnant of Christians—whether teachers or disciples, whose faith in the testimony and teaching of Christ was so strong and firm as to rise superior to the love of property and of life and to the influence of the prevailing corruptions of Christianity, will now in their teaching and in their faith rise up in the persons of others, and in connection with Christianity rule the world by their moral and religious influence. In this sense they will sit on thrones, living and reigning with Christ, a thousand years. "The comfortable gospel of Christ will now be truly preached—truly received and truly followed in all places, to the breaking down the kingdom of sin, Satan and death. Christianity truly taught and believed, will now have its day—its flourishing period of power and dominion here on earth. This will be the first resurrection of Christianity as thus taught and believed. This will be the first standing up of such a Christianity in universal honor and dominion: it will be a revival under the Christian dispensation, far exceeding that which Ezekiel foretold under the old, and which Habakkuk desired when he prayed, O Lord revive thy work; in the midst of the years make known—in wrath remember mercy. This will indeed be a glorious standing up of Christian truth and a Christian faith, after the long period of their affliction and degradation. And blessed will that individual be who has a part in this first resurrection or standing up in the world—of our holy religion. On such the second death hath no power.

The ancient Jews understood by the second death—the penal state that follows the present life.

In the day that man first transgressed, he passed the same state of favour into a state of condemnation, and in this sense from a state of life into a state of death. This was his first death or state of condemnation. From this death or state of condemnation he was recovered into a new state of trial by the purposed incarnation, obedience and death of God, the Word. If in this recovered state of trial he lives and dies in sin and impenitence, he dies a second time, in the sense of passing into a second state of condemnation. In this second state of condemnation there is no more sacrifice for sin—no recovery to another state of trial, no release from punishment. This second death or state of condemnation has, however, no power over the true believer and follower of Christ. If a man keep my saying, says our Lord, he shall never see death—never pass into a state of condemnation. He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. According to Daniel, seventy-five years beyond the 1260 will begin this period of blessedness. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. It will be blessed to live and see this resurrection (of standing up) of Christian truth and Christian faith—but truly blessed will he be who participates in this glorious event, and becomes a true believer. He will be blessed in being holy and in being exempted from the second death—or eternal condemation.

The rest of the dead, or the other dead of whom it is declared that they lived not again until the thousand years were fulfilled, are those who were slain by the sword proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, as we learn in the last verse of the preceding chapter.

These dead had been the deceived opposers of Christ in his word or testimony, especially on the subject of his exclusive

mediatorship, and they are intellectually slain by that word or testimony, and are deprived of the will and power to continue their opposition to it.

These are not of the reprobate mind, peculiar to the different deceivers who constitute the three parties represented by the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These latter are to pass into a reprobate state—while the former, the deceived, will be convinced of their error by the Word of God, and that word will have no such deceived opposers until after the millenium.

We may suppose that the manifest and wonderful fulfilment of these predictions of John, as well as those of Daniel and Paul, and of other inspired writers, will be such a demonstration in favour of the word or testimony of Christ in its true sense or teaching, as to put to the silence of death all the opponents of the truth as Christ taught it, and as it has been delivered to us in holy writ, and to render all opposition of this nature inactive during the period specified. And we may suppose too, that the manifest and wonderful fulfilment of these predictions will have its influence and effect in the raising of faithful teachers of the gospel and true believers in it, to great power and prevalence in the world, and in continuing Christianity (thus taught and believed) in its great power and prevalence during the long period of a thousand years. There is, however, to be at the end of the millenium an outbreak of opposition to Christianity on the part, not of Roman and Roman Catholic deceivers, but of infidel deceivers.

Verses 7–11. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brim-

stone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

At the end of the millenium, the infidel deceivers will escape from their state of degradation and restraint, and again appear in combined active opposition to Christianity and renew the work of deceiving the world into a disregard and rejection of the Christian revelation. The nations from the four quarters of the earth called Gog and Magog represent the ignorant, fierce portion of mankind, whom the ancient Greeks and Romans with respect to their disposition and manners, would have termed Scythians, and we moderns would term Cossacks or Tartars.

They are represented as very numerous, and covering in their march or going, the whole flat or surface of the holy land, and surrounding on all sides the camp of the saints and the city of Jerusalem. The meaning seems to be, that infidel deceivers will now combine together and put into operation all their arts of deception, and draw the ignorant and fierce elements of society into a war (a contest of opinion) for the purpose of destroying the rule and polity of the Christian Church. All, however, who are thus deceived into opposition to Christianity, are destined to be consumed by fire from God out of heaven.

This fire may signify the miraculous knowledge contained in the prediction of Scripture. The predictions of evil which Jeremiah had uttered against Judah and Israel, and which they refused to believe, are compared to fire, which would certainly consume them. Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and the people wood, and it shall devour them. The interposition of fire from God out of heaven, represents the interposition of knowledge of an inspired source and nature. Knowledge so overpowering in its influence, as to convince the deceived of their error, and consume in them the spirit of opposition to Christianity.

But if the deceived are intellectually killed in this great contest, the more guilty class—the deceivers—are delivered over to the same reprobate mind and state to which those deceivers

had been consigned, who professing Christianity had calumniated and opposed it. In this penal state it reads, that they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. The word translated torments, signifies torture inflicted upon persons who are unwilling to confess their guilt or to disclose their knowledge of the truth. This word here seems to signify the mental torture of a person in witnessing irresistible demonstration in favour of some truth which he bitterly hates and opposes, and which he will not confess but perseveres in denying. It is a fearful thing to aid in deceiving men by corrupting or calumniating or denying the gospel of Christ.

The apostle repeats, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach another gospel, let him be accursed." "And if we sin wilfully after that, we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins but a certain, fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

After the infidel body, who deceived men into disregard and opposition to the Christian revelation, is delivered over to the torture of a reprobate mind and state, these will follow the general resurrection and judgment and the end of the present state and order of the world. How soon these latter events will occur after the final overthrow of infidelity we are not informed.

The 11th verse. "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away, and there was found no place for them."

The throne and its occupant represent the Eternal Judge entering upon the public administration of justice, and the white colour of the throne is emblematic of equity and impartiality. His work is perfect—all his ways are judgment.

The fleeing away of the heaven and earth from the face of this great Judge, so that their place could not be found, signifies, that when God shall appear for the general judgment, the present state and order of things will begin to be abolished. The

crust of the earth and the aërial heavens—the atmosphere—constitute a part of the present state and order of things which are to pass away. The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat—the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. The reign of sin and death and pain is also a part of the present state and order of things which will then be brought to an end.

Verses 12 and 13. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to the works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every man according to their works."

While the earth is fleeing away from the face of the Judge, it is also delivering up its dead to the judgment. The sea, and death, and hell, (the grave, or separate state,) deliver up their respective contents, to signify a universal resurrection of the dead. We are not, however, to infer from this representation of a resurrection, that the risen body is to be a body of flesh and blood—for flesh and blood, we are assured by St. Paul, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. The risen body will be composed of different materials, and be fitted for a different mode and state of being. For this reason, those found alive, at the coming of Christ to raise the dead, will be changed in their bodies. The resurrection of the dead—the putting an end to the reign of death, and the melting of the crust of the earth, will consummate the old state and order of things. When the general resurrection is accomplished, and death is abolished, and the crust of the earth is melted, and all upon its surface consumed in the melted mass, and the very air has exploded, and is dissolved, and the final judgment is past, then will the old state and order of things on our earth have past away, so that it will be no more possible to find vestiges of their former

existence, than to find the places of the heaven and the earth, supposing they had fled out of universal space.

The period of the general judgment, is the final period of the old state and order of things. Because this period is called the day of judgment, we are no more to understand it to be a period of twenty-four hours, than we are to understand in this limited sense, the day of adversity, or the day of prosperity.

It would seem, that the place where the general judgment is conducted, is beyond our earth, but where beyond our earth, we know not. Our Saviour, at his ascension, disappeared beyond the clouds, but where heaven, or the place is, in which he now exists, in his glorified humanity, we know not.

So much, however, is definite and certain, concerning the general judgment, that on that occasion, God, in the person of Christ, will make himself manifest in a material form, and that the award which every one receives, will be based upon a perfect infallible knowledge of his thoughts, words, and actions, during his existence in a former body. The dead are said to be judged out of the things written in certain books—the books of God's remembrance or omniscience, and another book called the book of life.

One great purpose of books, is to perpetuate the memory of things past—to transmit the knowledge of them to future generations. Now go, (says God to the prophet,) write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come, even for ever and ever.

These books record the names, the thoughts, motives, feelings, words, and deeds, of all who have lived and died. Every day we are adding to the contents of these books, and the record is as imperishable as the omniscience as God. These books are merely ideal. The omniscient has no need of books, in order to perpetuate the memory of things past. The past, the present, and future, are all alike before him. When he comes to judgment, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart. Besides these

books of God's remembrance, there is another particular book of his favourable remembrance, called the book of life. It was a custom in ancient times, to enrol in a public register, the names and deeds of those on whom the government or state purposed to confer favour and reward. The book of life, contains the names and works of those upon which the Great Judge purposes to confer honor and happiness. It is called the Lamb's Book of Life, because it is in virtue of the obedience and death of Christ, the Lamb of God, who was slain a sacrifice for our sins, that any names of men are registered therein, as persons to be favoured and rewarded. A book of remembrance is written for them that fear the Lord, and that think upon his name, and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day when I shall make up my jewels. If we possess a true Christian faith, and bring forth its appropriate points of righteousness of life, our names and works are found in the book of life, and we need not fear the contents of the other books.

It is further declared, that the dead will be judged according to their works. Those written in the book of life, as well as the other dead, will be judged by this rule. They whose faith in Christ has wrought in them the strongest attachment to him and his cause, and enabled them to labour for him and his cause with the greatest diligence and energy—they who have made the greatest proficiency in Christian knowledge and practice, who have come nearest to the mind, and character, and example of Christ, will be judged the highest rewards and distinctions in the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord, did indeed, forbid his apostles to be eager and contentious, about precedence and honour. Yet he assured them, that they would, in his future kingdom, be rewarded and honoured in a distinguished manner.

The rewards bestowed, though according to their works, will not be rewards of debt, but of bounty—the reward will be of grace, not of debt. The original Greek word translated grace, is the word from which our English word charity is derived.

The reward will be of charity, in the sense of alms, and the Judge will confer his rewards, his gifts, his charity, his alms, according to the various degrees of our attainments in Christian knowledge and practice.

So also the impenitent and unjust will be rendered different degrees of punishments, according as they have been more or less wicked, and done more or less mischief in the world.

Both punishment and reward, justice and mercy, retribution and charity, will be administered (impartially,) without respect to person.

The supreme court of heaven, having finished its business, closes its session, and then follows the execution of its decisions.

Verse 14. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

In the preceding verse, death and hell are spoken of as places, in this verse they are spoken of as persons.

In this verse also, existence in the lake of fire is explained to be a representation of the second death—that death—that penal suffering from which there is no recovery or release. The casting of the persons of death and hell into the lake of fire, must signify the translation of present death into the bitter pains of eternal death. And we are assured, that into these bitter pains, a certain portion of the dead are to be delivered, after their resurrection and judgment. For it is asserted in the next verse, (15th.) And whosoever (if any one,) was not found written in the book of life, (he) was cast into the lake of fire. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. This is that hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. This is that everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, and for all whose names are not found written in the book of life.

DISCOURSE XVII.

Rev. xxi. and xxii.

Verse 1. "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed away, and there was no more sea."

The first heaven and the first earth had fled away from him that sat upon the throne, and were no more to be found; and now the Apostle sees a new heaven and a new earth. The old state and order of things are succeeded by a new state and order of things, in which there is no sea, no population disposed to tumult, and difficult to keep quiet. We look for a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, (law and order.)

Verse 2. "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven; prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The holy city of Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, represents the religious or theocratical polity which, emanating from God himself, is to exist in the new state and order of things. This polity will be furnished with all the proper appendages to render it pleasing and acceptable to Christ—just as the bride is adorned with becoming clothing and ornaments to render herself pleasing and acceptable in the sight of her husband.

Verse 3. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

When God, the Word, was made flesh, he dwelt (or tabernacled) among men, and made himself manifest, and we beheld his glory or manifestation, and experienced his power to relieve suffering and disease. And in this new state and order of things, God will tabernacle in some sensible form among his

people, and converse with them, and remove by his divine power, all sorrow and evil from among them.

Verse 4. "And God shall wipe all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

The inhabitants of this new world will be forever released from all the miseries incident to the old world. There will be no separation of the soul from the body, and no pain of any kind or degree. Here, all these old things will have no existence.

Verse 5. "And he that sat upon the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, write, for these words are true and faithful."

The Great Judge here declares, that the renovation or change to be introduced by him, will be universal, and he commands the Apostle to commit this declaration to writing, as being faithful and true, and to be depended on.

Verse 6. "And he said unto me, it is done, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely."

The work of renovation is effected, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. I am the author and finisher of all things, new and old—the beginning and the end of them are my work. And I will gratuitously bestow the happiness of the new state and order of things upon all who thirst for it. Let all who earnestly desire this happiness, be assured of my willingness to bestow it, without money and without price, and let him be assured too, (verse 7,) that "he that overcometh, shall inherit all (these new) things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. I will be his portion and happiness—and he shall be to me an object of favour and affection."

But if the awful Being who sat upon the throne spake thus

graciously of those who thirst for the fountain of living waters, and who overcome the temptations and difficulties that obstruct their way to truth and immortality, far different is his language to the vicious and profligate.

Verse 8. "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

These are the characters represented by the beast, the false prophet and the dragon. They are destined to endure the second death—they shall go away into everlasting punishment.

That the apostle might have a more distinct view of the new Jerusalem, one of the seven angels takes him in vision to a very high mountain.

Verses 9—21. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

"On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And that the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the walls thereof. And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal, (in proportion.)

"And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel.

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysophrasus; the eleventh a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

The glory, or shining of God, has its abode in the city; and the light emitted by this shining forth—unlike the disagreeable dimness occasioned by the smoke which filled the Temple of Solomon at its dedication—will be of a sea-green hue, the colour most pleasing to the eye. In our risen and glorified nature, we shall behold with the most pleasing sensation, that glorious light in which God dwells, and upon which we cannot, in our present bodies and senses, look and live.

A glimpse of the light attending the glorified humanity of God, the word instantaneously struck the apostle Paul with a blindness which it required a miracle to cure. The meaning is, that one appendage of this new polity will be some pleasing, supernatural appearance, indicating the presence of God.

The wall of the city—the twelve foundations of the wall having in them the names of the twelve apostles—the twelve gates, watched by twelve angels, and having the names of the twelve tribes of Israel written on them; the four-square form of the city; the measure of the city in length and breath; the proportion of the height to the length and breadth; the measure of the height of the wall; the jasper or transparent green-coloured substance which composed the wall; the pure gold-like clear

glass of which the houses and streets consisted; the twelve different kinds of precious stones with which the foundations of the wall were garnished, all these parts and properties of the city have their signification in certain corresponding parts and properties of that theocratical and celestial polity in the glory and happiness of which the people of God will participate after the general judgment.

These significations will suggest themselves to those versed in architecture, mineralogy, and the constitutions, laws, and properties of polities and governments.

Verse 22. "And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

God, in his visible presence or glory, will not be concealed within a building or house, but will be manifest to all. Then we shall have access to the power and glory of God and the Lamb, without the intervention of a temple with its priests and sacrifices.

Verse 23. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

God, manifest in a particular form and voice, will serve the purpose of supreme authority and government in this sacred polity. God will be present in some sensible form to instruct and to govern.

Verses 24—26. "And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it; and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honours of the nations into it."

The states or kingdoms of the saved will live and act under the genial influence of knowledge and instruction, which, proceeding from God and the Lamb, constitute a permanent privilege of the celestial polity. The kings and nations of the earth, the different rulers, and powers, and principalities in the new state and order of things, will bring their glory and honour into

the sacred city, will render every mark of regard and devotion to this theocratical polity.

The gates not being shut by day, and there being no night, the gates consequently are never shut. All will be peace and security; and among its citizens will be found only the pure, the innocent, and the lover of truth.

Verse 27. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

None who practice immorality, idolatry or deception, will be found among its citizens. Its citizens will be no other than those who keep the commandments of God, and whose names are registered in Christ's book of life.

Chap. xxii. 1—5. "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

The fountain of living water proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb, represents a fountain of truth free from the muddy admixture of error, proceeding from a divine authoritative source and easy of access to all.

This primary divine fountain of pure truth will serve to nourish that more substantial and invigorating truth, (food for the intellect,) which is represented to grow upon the tree of life. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.

The water of the river of life, and the fruits of the tree of life, represent the abundant means and opportunities which those who live under this divine polity will be supplied, in order to slake their thirst for truth, and to preserve intellectual life in health and vigour. And there shall be no more curse; no mark of the divine displeasure; no penal inflictions; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. God in Christ will be constantly present in his authority, and his servants shall serve him—here all will be ready and cheerful obedience on the part of his ministers. And they shall see his face—they shall be admitted to near intercourse with him. And his name shall be on their foreheads—they will be recognized as the faithful ministers of God. And there shall be no night then; no ignorance; no intellectual darkness; no dark ages. And they shall need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light. They shall be dependent upon a divine source for intellectual light, and no longer need the means by which knowledge is now diffused.

Verses 6—9. "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servant the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I, John, saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren, the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book; worship God."

And the angel assures the apostle, that what had been said concerning the polity of the New Jerusalem was certainly true. The angel also declares that he was sent for the purpose of making known to the ministers of God future events, the beginning of which was near at hand, especially the coming of Christianity in victory over the Roman pagan government. The angel pronounces the man blessed who heeds the direc-

tions and disclosures of this book, and regulates his conduct accordingly.

And now the apostle again forgets himself and falls prostrate to worship before the angel, but the angel would not allow him to do so, declaring that he, the angel, was but a minister, a fellow of the apostles and prophets, and of those who practice a pure Christianity according to the directions of this book, and that the apostle must make God the object of his worship, and render to him his homage and thanks for these prophecies, and not to an angel or departed saint.

Verses 10 and 11. "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

The time being near for the fulfilment of the first of the predictions of this book, the apostle is urged to publish the book without delay. What is said concerning the just and unjust, the pure and impure, continuing in their respective characters, may mean that the unjust and impure will not be drawn from their evil course by all the evils which this prophecy has denounced against them, while the just and pure will persevere in their course notwithstanding all the persecutions and oppression which, according to these predictions, await them in the course of human events. The language of Daniel is of similar import.

Many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

Verses 12–15. "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sor-

cerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

The angel here repeats the speedy coming of the author and finisher of the Christian faith, to overthrow, by the influence of his religion, the pagan, persecuting power, and to favour the professors of Christianity, according as their works correspond with their profession. They who do the commandments of God, are pronounced by the angel blessed, as being destined to a right of participation in the celestial, theocratical polity, while the wicked and vicious are denounced by him as excluded from such right.

Verses 16–21. "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

And the spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things, saith, surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

The prophecies of this book are the testimony of Christ to Christian communities, the author of them is declared to be both the root and the offspring of David. He is, in his Divine nature David's Lord, and in his humanity, David's son. He is the bright and morning star in the sense of the greatest and most illustrious teacher among all the sons of men.

The invitation to come to Christianity and drink of the fountain of truth is made known by inspiration and by the Church,

and is to be made known by all who hear it. And all men are declared welcome to come and drink gratuitously of this fountain.

We are cautioned how we deal unfairly with the contents of this book, and we are assured that they who do so will be excluded from a participation in the blessings of the celestial polity.

The author of these prophecies, the true and faithful witness, declares, in conclusion, his speedy coming, to begin the fulfilment of his prophetic testimony. And the answer of the apostle is, Amen. So come, Lord Jesus, and finally the apostle in a benediction, wishes that the mercy, the charity of Christ, may abide with his Christian brethren.

RECAPITULATION.

The sixth chapter foretells a series of changes in military and imperial power, from the beginning of the second century down to the reign of Dioclesian; the persecution under Dioclesian, and the fall and ruin of Paganism under Constantine and his successors.

The seventh chapter foretells the general apostacy which, in its individual (not corporate) character, occurred in the course of the fourth century, before the breaking loose of barbarian power from all restraint.

The eighth chapter foretells certain calamities or woes, which, after this general apostacy of the fourth century, were to befall the Roman world.

These calamities are, the ruin by war and devastation of the flourishing part of the Roman population, including families of rank and wealth; the fall of the people of the Roman city from their eminent condition of security and power; the prevalence of Arianism among many of the foreign nations settled and established in the empire, together with the partial obscuration of the imperial and subordinate lights of the Roman world. We find the imperial power in a partial state of obscuration when, in the year 476, Augustulus was compelled to resign and abolish the imperial office in the west.

These four woes were nearly cotemporaneous, but in the last verse of the chapter three more are announced, which are to be consecutive.

The next, the ninth chapter, describes two of these three woes. In the first one of the three, the angry elements of sect and fanaticism, which had been kept under, are freed from confinement, and rising into notice and consideration, injuriously

affect supreme authority and the public mind. Along with these elements, and for awhile concealed among them, rise also into notice and consideration, the Mahomedans of Arabia.

These zealous and fanatical Mahomedans, by their success in war, and by their accusations of idolatry, for a long time annoyed the Roman Christians, exciting them to ineffectual efforts to destroy the Roman idolatrous spirit and worship existing among them.

What opened this well of angry fanaticism, was the controversy excited by Nestorius.

This controversy began in some misunderstanding concerning the sense in which Christ was the Son of God, as distinct from his humanity; and in the course of its progress, besides other fanatical sects, it brought out the Mahomedans, who denied that God had a son at all in respect to his divine nature.

In the next, or second of the three woes, the Turkish Mahomedans act a conspicuous part.

For awhile they are confined in their fanatical power and influence in the presence of the Greeks, by the power of the Moguls and Tartars on the one side, and by the Latin crusades on the other, but being in the fifteenth century loosed from this confinement, they proved very destructive to Roman Christianity.

In the tenth and eleventh chapters, our attention is taken back to a certain period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, cotemporaneous with the two woes, during which the apostacy is to exist in a flourishing state, and to treat in a degrading manner the polity and external worship of the Christian Church.

We are given to understand, that at the end of this period, protestant teaching, for three and a half years, will receive some peculiarly severe treatment at the hands of the apostacy in its Catholic corporate character; that this treatment will be immediately followed with some calamity upon the Roman polity, and that when this calamity is past, the second woe is past, as

well as the one thousand two hundred and sixty years. The first part of this second woe comes through the Turks, but the final part is in some way connected with Protestantism. It is declared that the third woe will follow quickly at the end of the second.

In the next three chapters, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth, we are taken back to the time of Constantine, and are conducted down again beyond the one thousand two hundred and sixty years to the third woe.

The twelfth chapter describes the conflict between Paganism and Christianity in their respective corporate characters, and predicts the decline of the original Christian corporation, Catholic, into a state of obscurity and of imperfect polity during the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the flourishing of the apostacy.

The thirteenth chapter describes the apostacy as consisting, during this period, of a corporation Catholic and a corporation local, together with the papacy in its representative Catholic character.

The fourteenth chapter brings us beyond the one thousand two hundred and sixty years into a period of increase and joy to the remnants of pure worshippers, and of distress and woe to Rome and the apostacy.

Being now brought down again to the third woe, our attention is particularly called to that woe in the two next chapters, the fifteenth and sixteenth. This third woe completes the inflictions of an angry providence upon the Roman world, to the joy of those who have proved themselves victorious over the power and influence of the apostacy.

It is divided into seven parts. In the first part, some events befalls the Romans, and proves very annoying to the partisans of Roman Catholicism and of the papacy. In the second part, some principle is infused into the population at large, which will prove mortally destructive to the existence of Roman corporate life among them. The third part relates to the more cultivated

population and communities in communion and friendship with the Romans. They will become imbued with some principle extremely hostile to the persecutors of a pure Christianity.

In the fourth part, the intellectual and the moral influence of the supreme authority acts with great power and severity upon the men of the apostacy, and proves very annoying to them.

In the fifth part some calamity befalls the seat or administration of Roman Catholic government, depriving it of its glory and influence, and affecting the men of the apostacy with extreme chagrin.

In the sixth part, Roman polity loses the support of Greek or Russian influence and example, and this loss is followed with a general controversy on the subject of invoking demons or mediators.

In the seventh part, something occurs in the public mind, (the element upon which public authority depends for its life;) and this occurrence will be followed with the greatest change or revolution ever experienced in the Roman world. And this change, or revolution, will be followed with the ruin of Roman polity and all idolatrous polities; with the reduction of the distinguished portions of the population into a common standing, and with the fall of some heavy calamity upon the men of the apostacy.

We have had as yet no account of the apostacy in its corporate character *during and beyond the third woe.* And we have had moreover but a partial account of the ruin of Roman polity, and of the circumstances of the great controversy on demon invocation. These three points are more particularly noticed in the three next chapters, the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth.

In the seventeenth chapter, Rome is exhibited to us as a body politic, sustained by the Catholic body politic and its different sovereigns or states. The different Catholic sovereigns and states for awhile lend their power to this Catholic body, but after the end of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, and during the course of the third woe, they will abandon Roman Catholi-

cism, and their regard for Rome as a body politic, will be changed into hatred and penal inflictions; and they will deprive her of her wealth and make her despicable.

The eighteenth chapter describes the ruin of Rome more especially as a polity, and this ruin of Roman polity in the beginning of the nineteenth chapter, is celebrated as redounding to the praise of a righteous providence, and as about to be performed with a happy and glorious change in the condition of Christianity as a body politic.

From the latter part of the chapter we learn, that the great controversy on the invocation of mediators, will terminate unfavourably to Roman teaching and Roman Catholicism, and to the sovereigns and rulers who aid and abet them in their idolatry.

We have now reached the end of Roman teaching, of Roman polity, and of Roman Catholicism.

The apostacy, in its corporate character, has finished its career, and the third and last woe is now past in all its parts, and Christianity, as a body politic, is now to exhibit a fair and shining character for purity and righteousness, and to enter into a more endearing relation of cordial obedience and submission to the authority of Christ. We have been informed that in the great controversy on demon invocation, the infidel party took the side of Roman teaching and Roman Catholicism, but how this party was affected by the issue of that controversy, we have not as yet been informed. This information is given in the twentieth chapter. While Roman polity, Roman teaching, and Roman Catholicism, at the end of this controversy pass into a reprobate state, from which they are never to recover, the infidel party of opposers and deceivers meet with a milder doom, and one from which they are to recover after the lapse of a thousand years.

From the nineteenth chapter we learn, that during these thousand years, (the Millenium,) infidels will exist in a state of degradation and restraint in their corporate character; that Christianity, as truly taught and unfeignedly believed by men

who loved not their lives unto the death, will reign and flourish throughout the world; that at the end of the Millenium the infidel party will recover from their degradation and restrained state, and deceive the turbulent part of mankind into vain attempts to overwhelm Christian power and destroy the polity of the Christian Church; and that this kind of opposers and deceivers will then pass into the reprobate state from which there is no recovery, and that then will follow the general resurrection and the general judgment, and the end of the present system of things.

In the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, we have a description of the new system which is to follow the old. In the new system, they whose names are written in the book of life, will be made happy for ever in the more immediate presence and favour of God, while opposers, and deceivers, and culumniators, and the dissolute and wicked, will have their part in an eternal state of condemnation and woe.

These two last chapters call our attention more especially to that celestial, theocratical polity which is to be an important part of the new system. That polity will be gifted with every necessary attribute and appendage, to render those who live under it perfectly and immutably happy.

To this glorious polity will the Son of God admit his bride, the Church, when at the general resurrection he shall come down from heaven to take her home to his father's house, and make her happy there for ever. Blessed are they who are called to this final marriage-supper of the Lamb. Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they might have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city. It is worth living for such an end.

THE END.

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